The AMM MESSENGER

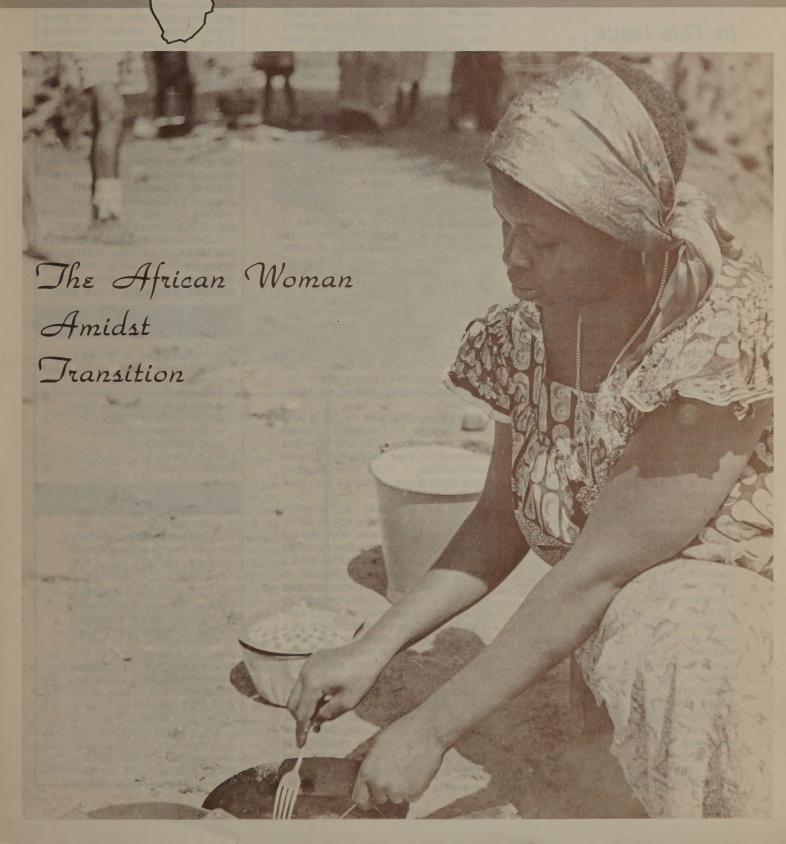




Vol. XLIV No. 2

Winter 1976

Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, Inc.





In This Issue . . .



IF I WERE a woman in traditional rural Africa, in an average village, what a lot of worry I would be freed from! I wouldn't be tortured by seeing the carpet grow threadbare, the tile come up off the kitchen floor, my knick-knacks grow dusty, the curtains get torn or soiled. There would be no winter boots or coats to wear out either. I would have one room - my cookhouse, to do duty as sitting room, dining room and kitchen and it would have neither carpet nor paint nor curtains. The walls would be of mud and the floor of mud and there would be no windows to put curtains over.

In this issue we are looking a little closer at the rural African woman who comes in contact with AIMM missionaries. First of all, we want to give you an overall view of what has been happening in women's work in Zaire from the early 1920's until now. Pioneer missionary, Mrs. Emma Moser, spoke to Ruby Neuenschwander of Berne, Indiana about some of her early experiences with women's work at Mukedi Station in the early 1920's. Jenny Bertsche, came on the Congo/Zaire scene some thirty years later and worked closely with women and girls - she talks briefly about this. And, LaVerna Dick summarizes some of her experiences with the Nyanga Girls' School (now called Lycee Miodi) which began in the early 1970's. We are so happy to report that it doesn't

end with LaVerna's report — this work with women and girls is going strong with much more visible progress than could be seen fifty years ago.

In North America I think we often tend to put an African woman into something of a "lump". We no doubt visualize her as female - but lost in the crowd. Conversely, perhaps, the African woman thinks of North American women in the same way. Let us stop again and remember that people are individuals and cannot be lumped together with an unfair set of characteristics. We'd like you to personally meet Baba Irimangoro on page 6. Baba lives in a rural area of Zaire and is a most remarkable individual lady. Please keep in mind that there is not really a "typical" African woman. There likewise is no such thing as a "typical" American or Canadian woman. We all do things differently. We look differently, we cook differently, we decorate our homes differently, pin diapers differently, dress differently, ad infinitum. With this in mind, let's enjoy and appreciate everyone's individuality whether African or North American.

Rev. Rudy Martens in Zaire and Irene Weaver in Botswana discuss briefly the various roles and activities of women in their respective church communities. I think after reading these reports you can draw your own conclusions.

Last, but not least, is the minijourney via the printed page to Zaire,
Lesotho and Botswana with Martini
Janz as your tour guide. She travelled
with her husband Art and four others
during the month of September to
various AIMM fields. I suspect she
saw much more and has enough to
say about this trip than we could ever
possibly print, but she has given us a
glimpse of what happened. She briefly introduces us to a few people along
the way and has some pictures to
share. The trip begins on page 10.

Before you read any further, please look at the back cover of this publication for James Bertsche's editorial, "The African Woman Amidst Transition". I believe that in reading this brief message it will increase the meaning of this issue for you.

- S.F.B.

Editor James Bertsche Assistant Editor Sue Barkman

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The Changing Face of Women's Work in Zaire

"Girls — We're On The Way"



Work with women and girls which began in the 1920's

By Mrs. Emma Moser As told to Ruby Neuenschwander

OUR MISSIONARY WORK began in the early 1920's at Mukedi Station. We arrived at Charlesville by riverboat and from there we were taken by carrier to Nyanga. Our few days at Nyanga were spent learning some words and phrases in the dialect that was similiar to that spoken at Mukedi. However, even though we could greet the people in their language at Mukedi, the people were frightened by these strange white people and we arrived in an empty village. Since we had no place to stay, we used a building an earlier African teacher had built. This was only a roof on poles. Under this roof we set up two tents. Two single missionaries were with my husband and myself so the men used one tent and the ladies the

Work with the people was slow in starting. We needed to learn the language and had only the phrase Work with women and girls which began in the 1950's

By Mrs. Jenny Bertsche

THE EARLY 1950's found me a young missionary wife in the Congo with two little girls of my own. During the annual business meeting on Mukedi Station, I was soon assigned to the "Girls' Compound".

The Girls' Compound turned out to be a small fenced-in area with four well-built stone houses and a large central building used for palavers. There were sixty girls in the fence, ranging from ages twelve to twenty. They were lively, normal, healthy, stubborn and beautiful girls. To me it was a challenge and I was immediately attracted to them.

I remember reacting to the "Fence". Why fenced in?? I soon learned that the parents of the girls in the fence sometimes had put them there against their will. If they were homesick or frustrated in school, or resented discipline they sometimes ran away. Then too the fence was to keep men OUT as there was a problem with adultery. One thing that helped me so much was the fine African couple, Sheta Zacharle and Sona Pauline. They lived with the girls as houseparents and were so helpful to me in understanding these girls of another culture.

As in all Church Cultures as concerns girls, we had the problem of outer appearances. Tight rules had been laid down as mission policy long before I arrived. The girls must have very short hair, no earrings or jewelry, no make up, dresses had to be below the knee and during class all girls had to wear dresses of the same cloth. I did feel that the girls needed more individual expression - not so much uniform appearance and that more emphasis should be placed on

learning in school, sharing work chores, learning to live with others and in building Christian character. Girls often came to my veranda for counsel, to share problems, or to ask for prayer. There were many opportunities to help as the missionary was

respected and trusted.

I was particularly bothered by young weddings and mass weddings. Most girls only got to third grade - if that far. By the time they reached third grade they were well developed. The girl's father was desiring a dowry price and the young men wanting the girls. It was difficult under these circumstances to keep them in school. Mission policy forbade weddings during the school year. Thus right after school was out in June we would have "Wedding Day" at Mukedi in which anywhere from five to fifteen couples would be married in the same ceremony.

Early one Saturday morning, a frustrated young man came panting onto our veranda.

"I'm in trouble", he said, "My fiancee ran away yesterday. I bought her new wedding clothes, my clothes, plus the goat for the feast. All my relatives are here for the wedding. Don't you have another girl in the fence you can give me for the wedding?"

THERE WAS progress made with girls each year that I lived in Africa. We were able to speak out, asking that the girls have a voice in whom they should marry, and that the Christian couples' happiness was more im-

portant than the dowry money. But still in the 1950's the general attitude was that girls were created for man to work, carry water, chop wood, to cook, till the soil and bear children. A few men with money actually brought their fiancee to the Compound and paid for their schooling. They wanted girls who could read and write, who were clean and neat, who knew math and could buy wisely at the market. and could take care of a home and children. They were definitely the preferred girls and the churchoriented program was gaining prestige with the people.

WE WERE DEFINITELY "ON THE WAY"!!

"Mother, does Katshidi get to wear your long white formal?"

"Yes girls, she has taken care of you all these years while I was busy, and I promised her my white dress on her wedding day.'

"And did you fix her veil and

arrange the flowers?"

"Umhummm, and she's coming here to dress and see herself in the long mirror."

"May we see too?"

"Yes girls."

Katshidi had cared for, bathed, dressed, fed, played with, sang to and protected Sandra and Linda for years and they dearly loved her.

Katshidi, standing tall and beautiful, marched down the aisle of the Mukedi Church that Saturday afternoon to meet her husband to-be. His eyes were brimming with love for this unusually fine Christian girl, who was soon to be his wife. The music was playing and the African pastor took his place. While my little girls' eyes danced with excitement, my heart welled up with gratitude to the Lord for having a small part in training this girl and others like her who would become the future mothers of Congo. It is truly the Gospel, through God's grace that lifts women to a high place.

Emma Moser . . .

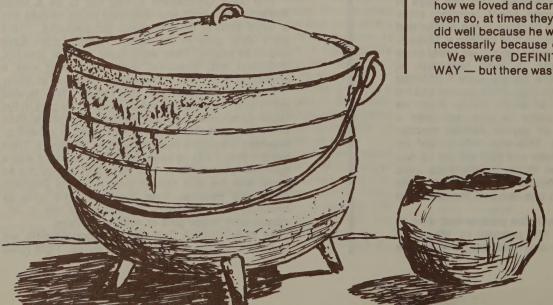
"What is this?" to use. As I learned a few more words and walked through the village the women began to see that I was safe and stayed by their huts rather than hide, and sometimes even greeted me. The women had a very hard life as they were required to do all the field work, carry water, chop wood, prepare food and other hard tasks. Their main dish was Musa, a mush made from the cassava root and cooked over an open fire after it had been dried and pounded. The men did no field work and this only changed when the government later assigned them plots of ground and required the men to work them.

We tried to start meetings with the people not only on Sundays but also during the week. In these gatherings we taught them about the Lord and also tried to help them to read simple words and to sew. I worked with the men first until the women had courage to follow and come to learn too. At this time the men wore loinclothes. The women wore skirts made of raffia fibers hanging from a cord around their waist. Some of the Christian women at Charlesville were wearing longer skirts and a gathered short overblouse, so I taught them to make these dresses.

AS I WORKED with the women more, I also tried to teach them in the proper care of their children - especially the babies. They bathed their babies by pouring cold water over their heads and bodies. The bables were fed mush which was formed into balls and pushed down their throats with their fingers. Naturally the babies didn't thrive on this care but change was difficult. Suitable food for the babies was hard to find as even fruit was not available until we brought in banana trees from other areas.

None of my teaching seemed too effective until our own baby boy arrived. Then they could see that we had children just as they did and observe how we loved and cared for them. But even so, at times they felt that our son did well because he was white and not necessarily because of proper care.

We were DEFINITELY ON THE WAY - but there was still much to do.



Lycee Miodi

By LaVerna Dick

IT WAS August 23, 1973 when I first arrived at Nyanga, the station where I would be working for the next three years. My assignment was to help start a school for girls.

When I arrived there was very little work being done with the unmarried girls. On some stations, the girls were being helped some after school hours, possibly spending several hours a week learning something that which would be helpful to them.

It did not take long to realize that there was a great need to develop a program which would give the girls a chance to get ahead. There were very few girls in secondary schools in comparison to the number of boys and there were only a few girls who had managed to get through secondary school curriculum that would help them be better

By the time I arrived in Zaire much of the groundwork had been done for the school which we were to start. It would be a program designed to give the girls the knowledge which they would need, not only to be better homemakers, but also to learn a salable trade so that they could also earn a living. The school was started on the Junior High level, but it was changed to the Secondary level after the first year.

The longer one works with the girls, the more one is convinced about their needing a chance to better themselves. There is a need for education for girls on every level, from that of the drop-outs to those who are capable of attaining a secondary school education and possibly going on to get university training as well.

There has been a considerable amount of interest and positive reaction shown to this program for the girls.

It was the church leaders who decided where the school would be, at what level the

program would be taught, who would direct the school, etc.

The government school inspector showed his sentiments when he made the statement that the development of a country is in direct relationship to the development of its women. He always had words of encouragement for us and stressed the importance of a program designed especially for the girls.

The official in the government education bureau repeated frequently that this school was the only one of its kind in our area and therefore it was helping to meet a need

which, until now, had gone unmet.

Fathers of the students often stopped to ask how their daughters were doing in school. They would express their gratitude for what the girls were learning.

One time when the girls came back from vacation, one of the girls told us that she had taken some of her garments home. With pride and satisfaction she said, "They did not believe that I had sewed the clothes. They thought the tailor had made them.'

Another girl made the statement in class one day that now she felt she could do anything. These girls are not only learning a trade, but they are learning to have confidence in themselves as they find out that they are capable of producing something that is acceptable to others.

Before the end of the 1975-1976 school year, we already had a long list of names of girls who wanted to enroll in the 1976-1977 school year to fill half of the new class.

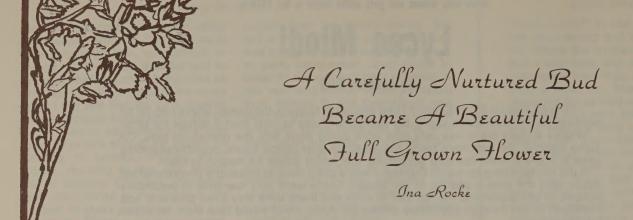
WHEN WE started this program, we started it from scratch. We had no textbooks, we had no one to help us interpret the curriculum guides which we had, which were incomplete. We acted on advice given to us by church leaders and parents.

If one were to compare the program we have today with the one we started with, one would see many changes. As we have worked, we have seen where improvements needed to be made, and we have made these changes if it was possible.

THERE ARE still many things which need to be done. This program does not meet all of the needs of education and help which the girls need. But it does reach one segment of the population, and we hope that these girls will be the ones who will help us to meet the other needs in their communities.

". . .This seed grew and produced a crop one hundred times as large as was planted. . ." (Luke 8:8 Living Bible).

"If Christianity has brought one blessing to the Congo — it is giving a woman a personality and dignity of her own." _ quoted from Harve Driver in 1952



"You know, I was the first boy from our village of Ipundu to graduate from primary school," said young Ndjare Tambue leaning on his short-handled hoe. "And here I am about to graduate from the Ecole Evangelique."

Ndjare was helping us that day, early in 1959, to fix up a garden plot for soon arriving missionaries at Ndjoko Punda. This was the first time we met him. In September 1961, we met again at Nyanga in the classroom for the third year Bible Institute students. Ndjare was a pupil in my visual aids class for men.

In the afternoons we taught the wives of the students, but Ndjare was the only one without a wife. The entrance requirements stipulated that a man must be mature and married with work experience. An exception was made for Ndjare though, so that his people could begin to have trained church leadership. Since then only married students have entered.

He was twenty-nine years old when he entered Bible Institute. His promised bride-to-be was a girl, thirteen years old from his home village. He could have chosen another older girl, but God had his hand on Ndjare. That young girl named Irimangoro was worth the waiting.

In June 1963 Ndjare and Irimangoro were married. They purposed in their hearts to begin their home with God as the Head. Even though he had taken his flower while she was still a tender bud, he was determined that she should be nurtured to a full grown bloom.

BABA IRIMANGORO is a woman privileged above many. Her husband takes her into his confidence, wants her to be at his side in the home, in the church work and in the community.

He encouraged her from the beginning to help make their home a place where people of all walks of life would be welcome — from the important officials to the humblest worker. This welcoming of guests has given to Baba Irimangoro a certain poise that nothing else could have done. She is allowed to be herself in the preparation for guests. Many men hold the keys to their very special provisions such as rice, tea, coffee, sugar, milk, kerosene. The wife is not free to use these usually. Not so in Pastor Ndjare's home. He trusts her to use these wisely.

As soon as Muima, their first little girl was able to walk and talk, they taught her to give each guest a special handshake of welcome, pulling out a chair for them. Each successive child has been so taught.

How can wives have self confidence if their husbands always say, "Oh, you can't do it right you're not smart enough". Pastor Ndjare understands this.

Alladin lights are precious things in Zaire and "ticklish" to handle, especially

the very expensive, hard-to-find mantles and chimneys. But Baba fills, trims the wick, washes the chimney of their Alladin even when guests are present. The Pastor has done all he can to give her confidence.

Many men hide the facts concerning their finances. Often a wife doesn't even know how much salary her husband gets or anything about his other financial deals. When the Pastor is about to go on a trip, they count their money together. Baba keeps the keys and if there are some money transactions to be made while he is gone, she knows what to do. When trips are made to Kananga, she is free to use money there to buy materials she needs and wants.

Another woman who was not coming to sewing classes was asked why. She replied that she was afraid to ask her husband for the money necessary to buy materials. After several months she still was afraid to ask him. What a contrast in women's lots.

PASTOR NDJARE didn't want his promising bud to blacken, but come to full bloom. Because of his loving concern, it was opening — opening more and more toward full maturity. He was very aware

of the fact that Baba Irimangoro had not been able to get the Bible and Home Economics training given to the wives of the Bible Institute students. During the eight years that they were at Mapungu he did all that was possible for her to receive more education and experience. She learned to read the Tshikongo Bible fluently and also to teach it in women's classes. There was also a good program of sewing classes for wives of the oil company workers. Outsiders had to pay to attend. Pastor gladly paid for Baba to attend. She applied herself diligently and later was asked to be a teacher of one of the classes.

Since January of 1972 they have been living at Banga. Pastor is the elected *Chef du District* of Banga. This is a very important position.

Switching over to Tshiluba, which was not her native tongue, after so many years of working with Tshikongo was not easy for Baba. At first she read the Tshiluba Bible very hesitantly. But that did not keep her from taking part in the women's work.

She was now *Madam Chef du District*, but she wisely did not demand or even expect to be the President of the Women's

group but gladly took her turn at doing whatever was necessary.

Soon she was fluent in Tshiluba though not losing her Tshikongo. There seems to always be some new medical or school personnel and their families at Banga, whose first language is Tshikongo. It is a relief to them to have someone welcome and make friends with them in their own tongue.

YOU CAN'T IMAGINE the number of people she must feed every day. She never counts noses but just keeps on making more pots of bidia until all have had an opportunity to eat. Sometimes there are as many as twenty students from the outlying villages who are in high school or primary school eating at their home. And there is always a group of relatives and friends coming or going who may have come for medical care at the dispensary. Pastor is a good friend of a commercial trucker from Tshikapa who comes once a week, either hauling supplies from Ilebo to Tshikapa or buying up manioc, corn, peanuts or other supplies. They come at all hours of the day or night - passengers and all - thirsty, hungry and needing a place to rest. It is usually impossible to give them all a bed but they can all grab into large bowls of mush and greens with fingers and eat until they are full.

Where does all the food come from? Sometimes the family is well repaid with special favours and sometimes not. How can they do it? They have some fields. Pastor says, "People often say that our manioc produces so many good greens —

Baba Irimangoro and her three year old daughter in the kitchen stirring another pot of bibia. more than anybody else has." Christ's words in Luke 6:38 are a reality to them.

"Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together and running over. . ."

Baba Irimangoro doesn't have an electric stove to help her cook for all these guests. She uses a room in the back store house where a sentry used to sleep, to cook. She cooks with the ever blackbottomed pans placed on an iron tripod over a wood fire. She sits on a low stool to tend the fire and to stir the daily diet of greens and mush; sometimes meat, wild mushrooms, caterpillars or grubs. A rack of drying manioc is over her head to catch the heat and smoke. In season they have corn, beans, peanuts, squash, tropical fruits. Most of the activity of the home — the paring, pounding, shelling, eating, goes on right out there in the back yard between the main house and the small one in the back. A blazing fire on the ground makes for both light and heat in the cool of the early evenings.

Baba Irimangoro likes to sew. She has a hand Singer machine and sews her own and her children's clothes. To really relax she likes to knit a slip over sweater for one of the children and even more she likes to just sit and mend by hand. Many a wife of a VIP, such as Baba, has been heard saying, "We can't wear mended clothes!" But then — you can't put Baba Irimangoro in a lump with everybody else.

Her five-year-old boy likes nothing better than to kick a ball around, dreaming of the day when he can play soccer with the other High School boys. Her 10 and 3-year-old daughters like to use scraps of material to wrap around sticks of wood that they use as dolls. They join others in playing their games of hopping and clapping to different patterns and rhythms. They also are mother's helpers as most Zairian girls are from tiny on.

God has allowed Pastor Ndjare and Baba to experience much grief in their family. Death has claimed their first, third and sixth child. Pastor said, "We counseled other parents in their grief, then God called on us to demonstrate our faith. We had to trust God, to accept that He knows what is best for us."

The first two children who died were boys. Each had been named Tambue (lion). Now God has given them their third Tambue now five years old. The last child was a beautiful baby girl of two months who died in April, 1976. Baba showed no bitterness or complaining.

Baba still has time to help others — to do the work of a pastor's wife; to witness of her faith in Christ, to encourage the weak and troubled; to visit the sick; those in mourning; those with new babies. She is the President of the newly-named Maison Diaconale (Women's classes) and goes the second mile in helping to prepare the classes. Her steadying, calming force and wisdom helps cut many a palaver in the classroom. She can't be riled up. She can't be offended or hold a grudge. That's real Christian victory in this land.

She has a vision for helping the school girls more. Not just to sew, but in their lives — teaching them to know God in a personal way, to pray, to trust only Him. . .as they truly do in their own family.

Pastor Ndjare has realized his "dream" of helping Baba Irimangoro to become a beautiful mature flower — a true helpmeet in the home, a helpful Pastor's wife and a blessing in the community.

Satan's darts fly thickest at the faithful active ones. Pray always for Baba Irimangoro and for all of our Christian women who are willing to be used of God.

Baba Irimangoro supervising her "mother's helpers" while pounding manioc flour.





THE ROLE IN THE

Women in the CMZA in Zaire

Rev. Rudolph Martens

Some would say that it was a stroke of good luck. I don't look at it like that. Before attempting to say anything about the role of women in our church I had made up my mind to consult with a number of the local women who were active in the church. Naturally I had been observing the part of women in our local congregation, but I felt that some more research was necessary before I could write this article. I had my own ideas but I didn't feel that I was really competent to say anything that had not already been said by others before — and especially from the point of view of a man not being very closely involved with women's activities. So for that reason I planned to visit with the president of the women's group and two or three others who work along with her.

AS I ARRIVED at the home of Baba Kankolongo, I found her and another lady resting and chatting in the shade of a tree in the backyard. The friend had come from several kilometers away near the big Tshikapa market to talk about the work of the women in her congregation. I told them the reason for my coming. I had to paraphrase the word "role" because there is no direct equivalent in the Tshiluba language. I tried to get the idea across that it was not only the work nor the activity of women in the church that I was after, but the additional idea of faith, attitude and total being of the

person that I wanted to discuss with them.

Things were just getting along nicely when three other ladies arrived. Among them were the ones I had planned on visiting and asking their opinion. Here I began to realize, was the evidence of the Lord's direct help in providing me with the needed information.

The situation as seen from the point of view of the ladies I consulted is that they feel the men do not consider women to have a place in the church. They are not considered as the co-workers of the men in the work of the Kingdom of God. There is a deep rift between men and women in the church. A number of times they complained

that the men do not give them any help or encouragement.

I mentioned Dorcas as a woman in the early church whose work was greatly appreciated by all, especially the poor. When she died she was mourned by the Christian community — so much so that they asked Peter to come and help. He raised her from the dead. Undoubtedly she continued in her deeds of love to the needy. One of the ladies said very strongly that Dorcas was a man. She insisted upon it in spite of the rest of us trying to contradict her. Her face finally broke into a smile. We then realized that she was being facetious. She wanted to indicate by this that nobody today would ever make such a fuss over a woman.

"Seeing that these are the existing conditions — conditions which are not meeting your needs, what are your hopes for the future? What are some of the improvements

that you would very much like to see?" I asked them.

With these questions I wanted them to open up their aspirations to me. They responded by saying that first of all they would like to be considered as people — as human beings on an equal footing with the men. They wanted to be looked upon as God's co-workers in the church.

"Only what men do is important. But we want the women's work to have value in the eyes of the people too. We want to be like the women of old in the Bible, like Ruth, choosing the faith of her husband, and then having a very important part in the ancestry of the Messiah. We want progress to go forward, to strengthen each other in the faith. We want to win other women. We want the men to help us change things. We need their encouragement," they answered.

"How are you going to go about doing this since the men do not seem to want you to progress?" I countered. "Are you going to try to force the men to do this for you?

What pressures are you going to exert?'

"We talked of a number of methods, but they finally arrived at the conclusion that they needed to continue to talk, to use the "sword of the tongue" as one lady put it, to bring about change.

By way of conclusion, a few observations could be drawn from our conversation. As the Samaritan villagers believed on Jesus because they had made personal contact with him and not only because the woman at the well had witnessed to them, so I believe the church women must be more personally convinced of the Saviorhood and continued on page 10



Drawing on

OF WOMEN HURCH

Women in the Independent Churches in Botswana

Irene Weaver

THE WOMEN OF the Spiritual Healing Church in Gaborone were preparing a noon meal for a large number of delegates attending a church conference. Freely and obviously with great joy they moved around in their outdoor kitchen as they prepared the ingredients for a savory stew. The big iron kettle kept on bubbling and stewing as each ingredient was added. Soon the tantalizing aroma of browned meat, onions, potatoes and cabbage whetted the appetites of even those walking down the dusty path beside the church.

"Who is your organizer?" I asked.

"We are all organizers," they replied. "Whatever has to be done we do. We all bring water, we all cook, we all do everything — even sweep."

The babies crawled around the improvised work tables. No mother was frustrated it was their way of life. This is the way it is among the women of the Independent Churches. Helping on every hand and doing what has to be done is a way of life.

It is their role in the church.

Are any sick among you? Any poor, any sad, any a stranger? There is always

someone to meet that need.

Not long ago I went to the mothers' meeting which meets in the church every Thursday afternoon. I was very much feeling the need for some sort of affirmation. Just what prompted them to know, I don't know. After the meeting a group of women came to me and said, "Come and sit on the grass with us." So about six of us sat together talking of the meeting and the main points that had been brought out in the lesson. Out of the clear blue sky, one of them said, "We know you love us and we can tell. We love you too." That was all I needed to be happy. I was loved and they knew I

In Mrs. Kalatamo's home last week, we were having a sharing time.

"Do you know why we have our mothers' meeting on a Thursday?" They asked.

Of course I didn't know. One day is as good as another for me.

"We have our meeting always on a Thursday, the fourth day of the week, because it was on the fourth day of creation that God made the greater and lesser lights to give lights to the days and to the nights. We want to be as lights in our church. We want to shine."

I thought this was a beautiful thought. And best of all — the women DO shine in spirit. Perhaps the shine comes through more clearly in a mothers' meeting than any other place, where confession and asking forgiveness is a very real part of each fellowship. Every new year, each member makes a special prayer request of the group. Having made her request she remains standing until two or three women have affirmed her request with a promise to pray for her. It is a moving experience. (Why not try this in our women's meetings at home?)

IN BOTSWANA, the women are a very strong force in the church. Nearly always the women handle the money raising, handle the actual money and give liberally to

the needs of the church.

Just two weeks ago, the Spiritual Healing Church in Gaborone, was welcoming their new pastor and his wife. Everyone gave freely towards a welcome gift. One poor woman struggling alone to meet the needs of her four children came into the circle and for sheer joy and thanksgiving gave two pula. (This was a most generous gift for her). I know her struggles, I know how hard she works cleaning offices wherever she can find work, I know how far she has to walk to work, I know the very tiny one-room house which is her home. I know about her for she is a member of the women's Bible class which meets on Saturday evening.

My own offering seemed suddenly so small.

Is there any real head among the women of the church? Oh yes, there is and she is recognized with great respect. She is referred to as the Spiritual Mother, a very loving title. The prophets' wife and the wife of the President of the Church are honored with this title. Every pastor's wife assumes a leadership role among the women of her church. But titles, aside from "Spiritual Mother" are rare.

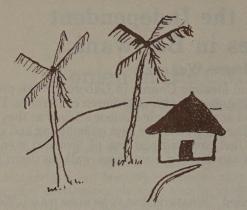
"But how do the men feel about your leadership role in the church, especially in

the area of finances?" I asked.

"Oh, they are happy that we take this lead," they replied. "We even tell them when it is time for the great church festivals of the year. They (the men) would be lost without us."



inda Short



Women in the CMZA in Zaire . . .

Lordship of Christ. I say this because, from our conversation, I heard many times that the men hadn't helped the women, hadn't encouraged them. It seems that they depend too much on the men.

CERTAINLY THE MEN ought to be the leaders of faith in the home and in the church. But if they are not, or if they don't want to see the women make progress what then? Shall the women then take the attitude that their faith and their activities in the church are not approved of by the men, and therefore should not be pursued? I believe not. They need to be less reflective of their husbands' faith and commitment. They need to find and express their faith in Christ in their own right. Zairian women tend to look upon their husbands as fathers. Conversely the men tend to look upon their wives as their children. The day when Zairian women will consider themselves as persons in their own right before God, when they will stand on their own feet as followers of Jesus, will be the day when they will find many of their hopes realized.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN in the CMZA today reflects the role of women in present day Zairian society. Women in the church do not as yet fulfill their spiritual functions as the scriptures would envision. Distinctions between the sexes are still being made. Questions are still being raised by the church as to the full contribution which women can make to its life. Certainly neither the men nor the women themselves realize the potential for church life, strength and growth that women can supply to its existence.

Some progress has been made in Zairian society. Women are involved in areas that only a few years ago were closed to them. Male customs of dominance are not wiped away overnight. But in the church, as the men begin to see the tremendous untapped resources that Christian women possess, through the influence of God's Word and of the Holy Spirit, will agree that they are Christ's disciples in their own right, that they are indeed co-laborers with God, walking in the tradition of Mary, Ruth, Elizabeth, Lydia, Eunice, Priscilla and other believing women of the Bible.

Relate — Relate! Relate? I prayed hard.

'You Lord, you do the relating through me.'

I Saw It First Hand

A wayside glimpse of an incredible journey to AIMM fields in Africa made in September of this year.

Martini Janz

HOW CAN I BEST share with you my incredible journey to Africa? The official minutes of the AIMM Executive Committee read: "Martini's assignment shall be to relate to the girls and women of the Mennonite Church in Africa as well as to our missionary women."

Relate — Relate! Relate? It seemed like such a nebulous term. I prayed hard. "Oh God give me real spiritual sensitivity to see, to hear and to comprehend that which will help me to understand. Grant me instant wisdom when I need to respond. Speak through me, when I need to speak. Remind my friends to pray for me, and you Lord, you do the relating through me."

August 29th, our day to leave finally came. Art had been on assignment in Zaire since July 2. Our older children were moving in to take care of the younger ones. The baggage was packed — it was many pounds overweight with truck parts, T-shirts, mower parts, tapes, a motorcycle helmet, calculators, books, needles, ad infinitum! Art had been called the "Pudding Apostle" since he carried a flight bag full of instant pudding powder for the missionary retreat; I was the "Scissors Apostle" since I was carrying a suitcase full of scissors for the Lycee Miodi Girls' School.

I knew that the Kinshasa airport would be our first major hurdle. Would my French come back when I needed it? During the long nights while Art was gone, I had been practicing my Kipende, Tshiluba and French. At 2:30 in

"The dedicated lives of our missionaries is something I never want to forget. I sensed an in-depth appreciation of them on the part of the African Christian women I met."

the morning it had begun to sound pretty good . . . but how understandable would it be when I needed to negotiate with the Kinshasa airport officials. How would it sound to the hundreds of people I was soon to meet up-

country?

Travelling with me were five other people; Mabel Mininger, mother of Ron who with wife, Colette are teaching at Ecole Secondaire and Lycee Miodi; my youngest sister, Linea with her husband Len Geiser and Art's cousin Peter Barkman and his wife Betty. The latter four were coming to see for themselves what God was doing in the Mennonite Church in Africa.

As Anna V. Liechty was giving us a guided tour of the Kalonda Bible Institute, her voice was drowned out by the sound of grinding gears of a truck filled with singing women. These were the women from across the river at Kibumba coming for the first of our many reunions. I wondered if after being away seven years, I would remember their names. Many would undoubtedly be girls who had been in the Nyanga Boarding School in the 1950's.

At that first meeting, four Tshikapa area churches were represented by several hundred women. There were welcoming speeches, eight special songs, and much joy and enthusiasm in sharing their present women's program with us. The Govern-ment School Inspector heard of our reunion and came of his own accord to publically thank me and all the women of North American Mennonite Churches for beginning the Nyanga Girls' School, now called Lycee Miodi.

Nyanga

We could hear the singing as soon as the noise of Charlie-Mike-Yankee's motor died down. The Nyanga women were at the airstrip waving palm branches and flowers and singing their official

welcome song. Pastor Mayambi and Mr. Ngulubi Mazemba had their hands inside the airplane window before we could get our seat belts unbuckled. After much handshaking, singing and embracing, Sha Pulu prayed. "These who have come are not only of our tribe, but also of our clan. We all belong to your family Nzambi God."

"Overwhelming" is such a weak word for this kind of affirmation and acceptance by Zairians and missionaries alike. Amazingly enough, I managed to remember most of the names of the women who came to the airstrip. It was dark and the lamplight dim, so my tears were not so visible.

Next afternoon the women gathered for a banquet in our honor. Goat meat, chicken, caterpillars and musa were served. Again there was much joyful singing. Kina Leta explained about their Maison Diaconale Seminars and introduced the delegates who had been chosen to attend. In early October they were planning to go out into the region to teach what they had learned. Final words to bring back to the women of North America were, "Don't forget us when you come into your kingdom."

Kalulu

Monday morning early we left by MAF for Kalulu village. Upon arrival, we found the entire airstrip lined with palm branches

tied with flowers. As the plane stopped, we could hear the drums and singing. Four choirs and six chiefs, representing six villages formed the honor guard to the church. The chiefs were decked out all in their formal dress. They held arrows, machettes, and hatchets made in their own blacksmith shops. These were later presented as gifts. Only the choir members, the chiefs, and the village elders had room inside the church building. The rest watched through the open window arches. The singing voices of these so called "baby church choirs" gave us goose bumps from the tops of our heads to the tips of our toes. The rhythm of the music slyly found its way through the soles of our nowtapping Mennonite feet. What joy unspeakable and full of glory. We felt our hearts wanting to burst. After the service, the elder invited us to the head chief's home for a love feast. Here Pastor Ngongo David served us musa and chicken. Pastor Ngongo is the kind of a man who can be President of the whole CMZA church with its 38,000 members and he can also be the circuit riding preacher in the Banjembe area. Wherever he serves his Lord, it is with much joy and enthusiasm. The Kalulu women proudly told us that they also had been able to send delegates to the Maison Diaconale Seminar at Nyanga.

After lunch the plane carried us

Tshikapa Airport "Limousine". Pictured from l. to r. Len Geiser, Linea Geiser, Betty Barkman, Martini Janz, Art Janz, Peter Barkman, travelling the month of September to various AIMM fields of ser-



on to Banga. Here the singing women came running to the airstrip to greet us. During the welcoming song a beautiful young woman came racing over to join in the festivities. Her friend quickly handed her a tin can filled with stones to shake. We learned later that Maria's greatest concern had been that she would be in labor when we came. Fortunately her baby had been born three days earlier. She had hopped out of her bed at the maternity when she heard the plane. At the church, a clothes line strung from one end of the platform to the other, held the sewing the women had done in their Maison Diaconale Seminars. The women delegates gave very complete, illustrated talks about every class they had in their seminars earlier this year. They also presented a drama on the Good Samaritan.

Since this part of Africa has no beast of burden, the lady who fell among thieves was carried on the back of the Samaritan woman. The Pharisee stuck her tongue out at the unfortunate woman lying in the road. The Levite bent down and took a look at her, saying, "Why you're not even a Mupende, how can you be a Christian?" Then she too walked on by. The Good Samaritan, after leaving the woman and some money at the Inn came back a second time to pay the rest of the debt she owed.

Ina Rocke shared with us that in her absence while Glenn was ill at Kalonda, the women met three times a week instead of once. Instead of the Bible class being a Martini Janz and Lodema Short presenting the gift of scissors to the President of the Junior Class at Lycee Miodi Girls' School. Sembeka Celine receives the gift with gratitude while another student looks on.



pre-requisite to attending the sewing course; now many more women attended Bible classes on-

EVERYWHERE WE WENT we sensed a tremendous enthusiasm among the women. They proudly shared with us about their work, their seminars, their plans to carry on the same program in the outlying areas. We noted how the older women were promoting the younger by choosing them as delegates to attend the classes.

Lycee Miodi

Visiting Lycee Miodi had special significance for me. The old dormitory houses had been restored

for the girls of a whole new generation. Quite a few of the students were daughters of girls I had taught in the 1950's. Whereas in the fifties I had been bitterly disappointed in my failure to integrate the girls of only one other tribe into our Primary level boarding school, now girls from every tribe were included among the students in the vocational High School.

Of the buildings Albert Drudge had built, I like the large, many-windowed sewing lab and kitchen the best. Here we met with the girls who had already arrived. School was to begin in one week and already the girls were coming for registration. Twenty-two new girls were planning to begin their first year. Lodema Short was to be Directress during LaVerna Dick's furlough. Mary Epp, Colette Mininger, Miriam Klassen and several Zairian teachers were to teach. Together with Albert Drudge, we planned the furnishing of the kitchen. It included three cooking centers, including stove, sink, cupboards, utensils and work tables. Most of the appliances and fixtures had been ordered from South Africa. At this same meeting the president of the Junior Class sent words of thanks to the women of the North American Mennonite Churches. Before leaving we presented the girls with the fifty pairs of scissors I had brought.

The three Zairian non-teaching staff members at the school



The chiefs at Kalulu were decked out in all their formal dress to welcome us.



We came upon a farmer in Lesotho in the mountains. He told us. "...the winter has been long and my oxen are lean, my plow is poor. I don't know what I'll do if it doesn't rain." Much of the land in Lesotho is very poor and overgrazed.

wanted me to know that they had worked without salary or compensation for thirteen months. The government is far behind in their paying of non-teaching staff.

LESOTHO

"Joyce, please send me the Bible lessons I missed. Since the U.N. has sent us to Bangladesh I have begun a women's Bible study and need all the lessons for teaching."

Joyce Gerhart's ministry to an international group of women in Lesotho is unique. Among others at the Bible study we attended, was the Attorney General's wife, the Canadian and American Agricultural Professors' wives, the MCC's Head Pharmacist's wife whose husband supplies medicines to all Lesotho mission hospitals.

Recently a woman confided to Joyce that the name of their new house was to be called "Settled". Smiling shyly, this young South African wife was telling this to her Rhodesian husband as well. "Finally, we are truly settled - we have found Christ and the healing in our hearts has begun."

This couple had not too long before lost their only children, a ten and twelve year old daughter by drowning. Their young Dutch Catholic friend, after much persuasion, had brought them to meet Bob and Joyce Gerhart at the United Church of Maseru.

Through Gerharts' friendship and loving ministry, Christ had come into their lives and was making all the difference.

This little mountainous Kingdom of Lesotho seemed to all of us rather like a never-never land. It is often referred to as the "Roof of Africa".

On our trip into the mountains, we came upon a farmer plowing with six teams of oxen. We asked if we might take his picture. He told us, "Yes, but the winter has been long and my oxen are lean, my plow is poor. I don't know what I'll do if it doesn't rain."

Much of the land in Lesotho is very poor and overgrazed.

BOTSWANA

"We have our women's Bible Study meetings on Thursdays since God created the larger and smaller lights on that day. Our desire is to shine as lights among the women of Botswana."

Irene Weaver took us to meet some of these women of the Independent Churches of this desert country. There was Seena whose husband had left her. She is struggling to support her four children by working at the government offices. There was Lillian in her blue woollen toque who obviously is a born leader and wants to know what we do at our women's meetings in North America. Also we met Ruth, the beautiful wife of the newly or-

dained pastor. Ruth grew up in the middle of Johannesburg and never knew that anywhere else in the world there were different conditions for blacks until they all had to move to Sowetho in 1960. Grace Tebhe also came in spite of her poor health. The hostess was not able to remain at the meeting since her small child had recently fallen into the fire and needed extra care. These are the type of women Irene Weaver relates to beautifully. They told us, "She is our teacher and we ask her many dumb questions for which she always finds an answer in God's Word. Together we learn from the Bible. We ask ourselves, What is it about?'; 'What question does it raise in our minds?' and 'What does it say to us'?"

THE DEDICATED LIVES of our missionaries is something I never want to forget. I sensed an indepth appreciation of them on the part of the African Christian women I met. Kina Leta put her arms on Lodema Short's shoulders and pled,

"Don't ever take her away from us — she taught our pastor and now she is teaching his children."

Lodema quiety answered, "But not without God's help."

Final words from the leaders of Maison Dianconale were, "Don't forget us when you come into your Kingdom."



Called and Sent . . .

Irvin and Lydia Friesen Take up Botswana Assignment

The latest missionary personnel to go to Botswana, Southern Africa to share in a Bible teaching ministry among the Independent Churches are Irvin and Lydia

Friesen of Dinuba, California.

Former missionaries to Zaire, their experience in bush evangelism, Bible teaching, and production of Christian literature will all be of distinct value to them as they take up a teaching ministry for the St. Philips Faith Healing Church of Palapye, Botswana, at the invitation of Rev. Willie Gulubane, its head and founder.

Going to Zaire the first time in 1946 under the Mennonite Brethren Board of Missions, they served there over a period of 25 years. Upon returning to the States in 1971, they accepted a call to the pastorate of the Country Bible Church at Orland, California, and have served

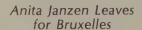
there the past four years.

The Friesens are the first personnel to be sponsored by the Mennonite Brethren Church for ministry to independent churches in Southern Africa under the auspices of the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission. We

welcome them gladly.

They left the United States on Friday, September 17. After visiting friends in Kinshasa, Zaire, enroute, they continued via Johannesburg arriving in Gaborone, Botswana, on Thursday, September 23. We wish them Godspeed as they take up their new challenging assignment in that land.





Sunday, September 12 was a day of fellowship, affirmation and farewell at the Toronto United Mennonite Church, Having been her home congregation for the more than five years she has lived and worked in that city, it became the privilege of the church to plan a commissioning service for Anita on her last Sunday at home.

Anita served a first-term under AIMM (then called CIM) from 1967 to 1970. During that term she worked varying lengths of time at Tshikapa, Kimpese and Nyanga in the capacity of Lab. Technician. In 1970 she returned to Toronto and worked closely in a training program organized by Seneca College for medical per-

sonnel looking toward overseas service.

She left on Monday, September 13 for Bruxelles. Belgium. After four months of French language review, she will go to Zaire where she is to serve on the staff of the nurses' training school at Tshikaji on the outskirts of Kananga. Anita will be teaching lab courses in this program as well as assisting in the large Protestant hospital also situated on the grounds. The Zaire Mennonite Church looks to this center both for special medical services as well as training for its candidate nurses. AIMM and the Zaire Church welcomes Anita back with joy.



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**Rev. and Mrs. Ben Eidse Mary Epp Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Harder Elda Hiebert Anna V. Liechty Rev. and Mrs. Rudolph Martens Rev. and Mrs. Glenn Rocke Leona Schrag Lodema Short Lois Slagle Dr. and Mrs. Merle Schwartz **Missionary Counsellor

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Women in the Independent Churches in Botswana . . .

And so they would be.

A FEW WEEKS ago the church celebrated the Passover. All night they sang and prayed. Men, women and children joined in the great rejoicing. The babies peacefully slept on the floor, wrapped in woolly blankets. In the early hours before the dawn of the Sabbath, like the women who brought spices to the grave on Easter morning, the women went about preparing the unleavened bread in keeping with the

Passover tradition. In small groups they gathered around the fires in the church compound, taking turns in baking the bread. What great rejoicing there was as they broke their fast in eating the Passover bread after the morning service.

"God loves us," one of the women said to me. "He was with us last night."

And so it was. God was with them, and they knew it.

EDITORIAL



HAVING EXPERIENCED the uninvited impact of white domination for many decades, Africa cannot ever again return completely to the life style and cultural patterns of its pre-colonial past. The elite of today's Africa realize this. Thus there is the present effort on the part of African leaders to blend traits and values of two worlds into a new way of life. But that new blend has not yet been achieved. The implications of this period of transition are perhaps nowhere more clearly reflected than in the life and experience of the African woman.

In traditional rural Africa, the African woman fills many roles in the life of the clan and tribe. She first of all carries what by any standard is a staggering routine of physical labor. She plants, cultivates, and harvests her fields all by hand. She gathers and carries fire wood to the family hearthside. She goes to the stream, spring, or well for the family's daily supply of water. She pounds grain and tubers, sifts flour and prepares daily food for herself and her family over an open fire. In addition to all these daily and seasonal responsibilities, she also bears and cares for her children, weaving the time consuming responsibilities of motherhood into the fabric of already busy days.

The object of many customs and taboos, she is, at times, relegated to the sidelines of village activity. On other occasions, however, she occupies a central place of attention and respect. In many tribes, for instance, the bloodline is traced on the mother's side, not on the father's. No marriage is complete or socially accepted until a dowry has been agreed upon and given by the father's family to that of the bride. With the great concern for the preservation of the tribe, the role of the mother is honored and the birth of a child is always the occasion for rejoicing.

But the toll of hard physical labor and childbearing is none the less relentless. In an Africa of transition there are many women who resist their traditional role and who consequently leave their home setting in search of new identity and a new way of life.

UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES are dotted with African girls. . .graceful, smartly dressed in colorful cotton prints, hair artistically done, notebooks under their arms. Business establishments feature feminine clerks and cashiers. Government offices have many girls working as receptionists and secretaries. In the hectic traffic of the city streets, a glimpse of an upswept head scarf frequently indicates the feminine chauffeur of a speeding Toyota. And the news of a woman lawyer or a government official no longer provokes surprised reaction.

But between this vanguard of feminine pioneers in Africa and their many sisters who still live and move in traditional rural areas, there are those who after leaving their home areas have not found a meaningful or adequate place in the urban centers. Caught by the need for the necessities of life, many of them must make eventual choices between a polygamous marriage, the life of a mistress, or as a last resort, a life of prostitution.

But whether hoeing in an isolated field, seeking out a difficult existence in a city slum or moving in circles of influence and wealth, the African women everywhere is touched in some degree or other by the powerful pressures under which traditional African patterns of life are changing.

IN THE MIDST OF CHANGE, however, stands the Church. It is our conviction that in an Africa of transition, the Christian faith, its message, its instruction, its encouragement, its framework of belief and values offer precious alternatives to the African surrounded by uncertainty. There are many who have already discovered and seized upon these alternatives.

We continue our ministry and witness on that continent with the prayer that many more may discover them as well.

Hrican (Woman Amidst Transition James Bertsche

- JEB







Vol. XLIV No. 3

Spring 1977

Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, Inc.

Missions and the Family L







Missions and the Family



MISSIONS Yand the ME SNOISSIW

In This Issue . . .

In this issue we have zeroed in on missions and the family, talking mostly about the children of missionaries - otherwise known as MKs. We have a lot of feelings expressed by both parents and children; hostelparents and editors.

Lorin and Sandra Ensz, AIMM/MB hostelparents have provided us with much of the material you will read in this issue. Thanks to Lorin and his camera you have some "firsthand" knowledge of what the hostel life is like. Sandra has provided us with insight into the basic ingredients making up the hostel. Sandra herself, experienced life as an MK in the same hostel she is now working as hostelparent, thus giving us this added dimension of experience. See what she has to say on page 3.

Ruth Roth, mother of three MKs has shared some of her feelings on page 6. She tells us what it was like to see her children off for another stint at school and how she and her husband coped with the situation as parents and as missionaries. They were always assured that "He...Will Perform."

Two residents of the hostel, Philip Martens and Laurie Bowers have expressed their "MK" viewpoint about school, hostel life, parents and living away from home. I think these two are definitely worth "Listening To..."

Sandra Bertsche, is also a hostelparent working with Sandra and Lorin. She has drawn us a word picture of "one of those days." In "That Was My Day Today" she has taken a composite of several days and put them together for your enjoyment. Faith Eidse, a former hostelite has provided the sketches to help your imagination along.

Be sure to take note of "A.I.M.M. UPDATE" on page 14. There are several news items there in which you will be interested.

Editor, James Bertsche, has again summed up the whole issue in another fine editorial. Be encouraged to read "Both Missionary and Parent?" on the back cover. He has covered all facets in a nutshell of family living on the foreign mission field. He states that it is possible for missionaries to be good missionaries and good parents but only given the proper facilities for education, dedicated hostel parents, adequate parental influence, love and your prayers.

I encourage you to pray with and for hostelparents, MKs and parents. If you should care to write any of the MKs living away from home or the hostelparents, their address is B.P. 4081, Kinshasa II, Republic of Zaire.

- S. Barkman

Editor James Bertsche Assistant Editor Sue Barkman

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The Hostel: Simply A Residence For MKs?

Six a.m. music at 70 decibels; 18 sleepy faces at breakfast; chattering schoolbus rides; bulging laundry baskets; hot picnic lunches hauled to school at noon...THAT's our hostel!

A riverview white house; tennis-basketball court; small shop; and tempermental kombi and bus...THAT's our hostel!

Ntoltila, the cook (best sweet rolls in town!); Ilunga, the laundry man and Kinua, the cleaning and gardening expert, THEY're our hostel too!

Prince and Chief, our bark-happy, leg-hungry German Shepherds, THEY belong!

Holiday trips to the falls or moto-cross; family devotions or game times; "Secret Santas", raids and waterfights... THAT's our hostel!

Rope-swing acrobats, joggers and cart-wheelers; whistlers, book-worms, mechanics and electronics "nuts", "A" students; musicians, student leaders and athletes...THAT's our hostel kids!

... 18 of us

Sometimes together, sometimes widely scattered

In place, activities or ideas

But giving each other

Love, laughter, teasing and sometimes tears

To grow by.

Sandra Ensz



Why do we have a hostel? Basically it's to be a home for missionary children who need to live away from parents while going to school. Earlier in mission experience here in Zaire, children attended mission schools and lived in the dormitories on campus. The atmosphere was perhaps similar to that of Christian dayschools and academics of the U.S. and Canada.

HEY CALL US AIMM or CIM, sometimes the "Mennonite Hostel". We're actually the AIMM MB Hostel in name, but our family's well integrated. The hostelparents and ten students are Mennonite this year and the rest of us come from Mission Aviation Fellowship, Christian and Missionary Alliance; World Health Organization and Methodist families. For about three years, the group has been almost stable so it's very comfortable. The eight girls are in 7th to 10th grade and the seven boys are in the 8th to 12th grade. AIMM/MB children may come as early as 5th grade and other children come either beginning with middle school or high school.

A hostel can be a great experience if it's seen as an opportunity to grow. It has been noted that God puts those people closest to us who will best give us opportunities to develop Christ-likeness. Opportunities at the hostel seem to never quit!

After the early 1960's when uncertainties in the political situation created a lot of fluctuation and mobility among mission personnel, education for mission and other English-speaking children from many parts of the country gradually centralized in Kinshasa, the capitol, where the American School was beginning.

At first, students lived with other families in town. But as numbers increased, mission-established hostels to accommodate these students were established

Currently, our hostel is one of three in Kinshasa. The American Baptist and Methodist-Presbyterian hostels are both a little larger. Most of the 80 or so students from these hostels attend the American School of Kinshasa which is now a private school of about 500 ranging from kindergarten through senior high.

When God places you away from parents, He seems to take on Himself the responsibility of caring for, guiding and loving you through other people around but also through a very meaningful relationship with Himself.

THE PROS AND CONS of hostel living have been often and sometimes hotly debated. Whenever a former hostel student has had a difficult time with social, emotional or spiritual growth, hard thinking and questioning results. Should children be required (or allowed?) to live away from their parents eight months of the year? Can hostelparents effectively substitute for real parents? What happens to a child's individuality and self-image when he is constantly part of a large group of peers?



EXPERIENCES AS A FORMER HOSTEL MK and now as a hostelparent have confirmed for me that rarely do the hostel kids themselves question the validity of their hostel living. It is basically taken for granted and more often than not, thoroughly enjoyed. As some of our kids have expressed, they find the "elbow

The growing pains experienced by hostel kids are most often typical of teenagers anywhere.

room" for personal decision-making, and the peer interaction conducive to growth and self confidence.

In fact both parents and kids have expressed that their "real family" experience and communication during the times they do spend together at vacations seem to be enhanced because they haven't been together constantly. This may be due to the greater objectivity with which they can confront problems that come up as well as to the spirit of openness that many kids develop in their peer environment at the hostel.

Our hostel tries to have few set rules most phases of our living together are understood. Many are habit. Flexibility and communication are more important than rigid guidelines. Even in areas that need to be regulated to allow us to live harmoniously as a big family, hostel living teaches us how important it is to keep in touch with each other as feelings or situations change.

THE GROWING PAINS experienced by hostel kids are most often typical of teenagers anywhere. Questioning and searching for real values and spiritual perspective, struggling to realize identity and fighting insecurities - the hostel doesn't preclude these. Some kids do well with the opportunity to work things out on their own, but personalities differ and others may need and prefer the support of discipline of small family living. Parents, hostelparents and the teenager need to work together to find God's best solution for needs as they come up.

A hostel can be a great experience if it is seen as an opportunity to grow. It has been noted that God puts those people closest to us (like, family) who will best give us opportunities to develop Christlikeness. Opportunities at the hostel seem to never quit!

In addition, when God places you away from parents, He seems to take on Himself the responsibility of caring for, guiding and loving you through other people around but also through a very meaningful relationship with Himself.

AS IN ANY OTHER environment, you can grow or be frustrated in a hostel. The choice is up to each person, but the potential for a positive experience is there, and God has made it a special one for many of us.

As in any other environments, you can grow or be frustrated in a hostel. The choice is up to each person, but the potential for a positive experience is there and God has made it a special one for many of us.

Sandra Ensz and her husband Lorin are AIMM missionaries serving as houseparents in Kinshasa. They have been in Kinshasa since 1975.

"He . . . Will Perform"

Ruth Roth

An aura of excitement hung in the air. "Aunt Agnes" had invited all the students who would soon be leaving for the hostel to a picnic supper made especially important as they hiked off the station, swinging a bulging basket of - we couldn't guess what was in it. Mothers were busy putting the finishing touches on the dresses or scrounging in the barrels for another pair of socks or sewing on the necessary name tags which would identify her childrens' clothes. Conversations among the young people were filled with last year's experiences at the hostel or of friends they would soon meet again or of the hostel parents whom they would see soon. Family conversations centered around the child's interests, his aptitudes, his abilities. But most of all, they centered around God's plan, God's purpose, God's leading for each member of the family.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN THE missionary children begins long before they leave for school and the hostel line upon line; precept upon precept. Perhaps missionary parents are more aware of the shortness of time they have to teach their children basic values such as character building, spiritual standards, moral standards, value systems. These are virtues that are more often caught than taught. Perhaps missionary parents battled the fact of separation from their children in their early decision to accept overseas service to Christ in "bush" situations. Whatever the case may be, each of us has been torn between commitment to Christ and His call and our responsibility to our children, with its desire to participate in their experience as they grow up. We have shed tears after bravely waving "good bye" to them as the plane took off and many prayers have ascended to the Throne of Grace for our precious children. My steps always led me to my bedroom where on my knees I reclaimed Philippians 1:6 each time our children left. "Being confident of this very thing, the He who has begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

EDUCATION OF THEIR children is a major concern and problem for missionary parents. The AIMM Board and Executives consider, with empathy, that education for missionary children is a high priority in their concerns. Through the years, provision has been made for the best possible training for our children. AIMM has invested funds and supported responsible Christian couples to be hostel parents in a comfortable, homelike hostel in Kinshasa where our missionary kids (MKs)

have a "home-away-from home" while attending the American School of Kinshasa nine months of the year. The hostel has a lovely, large, living-dining room; library for reading and studying; adequate play space both indoors and out; individual bedrooms which the kids can arrange and decorate to make it "theirs"; a modern, convenient kitchen with ample room for help from those inclined to culinary arts. Hostel "parents" carry the greatest share in making the life of each MK successful. Their role is not only that of supplying food and clean clothes and running an "institution" but it becomes that of a parent - interest in individual needs and problems; comfort when loneliness and homesickness come to the fore; discipline when necessary; love and understanding in the experiences of growing up; the ability to laugh and enjoy fun or pranks and the maturity to direct all of this in a Christcentered understanding way. The basic criteria of a houseparent is a love for the Lord and a strong love for young people who are in his care, sprinkled with a good sense of humor and mature, balanced judgement. Good training and an understanding of why children react as they do, always makes a situation less formidable. Hostel parents are key people on the missionary staff. A contented child at the hostel makes for contented parents in the bush. God gives gifts and special grace to hostel parents. They are fitted spiritually and physically by the Lord. They must be assured of God's direction in their lives and be committed to adapt to each situation that can arise from having 20 to 30 young people of varying ages living under the same roof.

Ruth Roth is the mother of three MKs. She and her husband Earl are currently home on furlough residing in Oregon.

God gives gifts and special grace to hostel parents. They must be assured of God's direction in their lives and be committed to adapt to each situation that can arise from having 20 to 30 young people of varying ages living under the same roof.

FOR MISSIONARY PARENTS, sending their children away to the hostel and school at grade 4 level is not an easy task. Communications in Zaire are erratic - mail may or may not arrive when Air Zaire flies in and so the eagerly anticipated letter may not come. This makes one wonder just how our children are - sick? Having exams? Is he on the soccer team? Did they celebrate her birthday today? Did he make first string on the basketball team? Who won the game last night?? Missionary parents in the "bush" have very little opportunity to share in the growth and development of talents and skills of their children in the hostel. We miss the excitement of sharing an art project, school carnival, class play, chorus concert. We missed the joy of cheering our boys as they played guard on the varsity basketball team or forward on the soccer team. We missed the deep thrill of hearing them express their new, deeper commitment to Christ as they experienced it with their friends. But through all of these times of loneliness, silent days, missed companionship, God sustained each of us and we learned that His grace is sufficient for both us and our children. Our family experience in sending our children to the hostel has been one of satisfaction, victory and maturing for us all. The home-bond has remained strong and together we grew in faith and trust in the Lord of Glory who called us to serve Him.

OUR EXPERIENCES OF having responsibilities in a "bush" assignment and rearing a family in a foreign culture have helped us to formulate a few ideas regarding the parents' role and attitudes toward their children. Above all else, many prayers have ascended for each of our children. Closely associated with this is open communication with our children such as frequent letters, sending cookies or other snacks, interest in their activities and when possible, a trip to Kinshasa to participate in some of these activities even if the cost is almost prohibitive. Many times their letters didn't give too much information, but trying to sense the attitudes

of the child as he or she wrote the letter helped to respond in a positive way that would encourage him. We have learned from observing others and from our own experience that having time for our children when they are home on vacation, and doing things together as a family is very important. Sharing our work experiences with them and making our children a part of our activities is also very important. Letting our children know that even if they "blew" it, they are still loved and encouraged to go on, has given a strong sense of security to them. Making friends with and associating with Zairian friends has helped them to feel at home in Zaire. Listening to their gripes and letting them tell "all" without being too shocked has helped to clear the air for their return to the hostel and school. MKs like everyone else, need this kind of therapy.

PERHAPS ONE OF THE most difficult experiences for an MK is the return to American culture upon completion of high school. Recently I visited with an MK who is a junior in college and whose parents are ready to return to the African overseas assignment without her. She said that even today she wonders about some of the things American students do and why they would even conceive of these ideas. With her parents gone again, she will not be able to discuss these things with them. Even after three years of being in the States she finds it difficult to share some of her childhood experiences with her friends because they cannot imagine what she is talking about. Adjusting to the American culture also takes an attitude of willingness on the part of the MK and a tolerance and understanding love in those with whom he or she associates.

HUMANLY SPEAKING, separation of parents and children is very difficult at best, but by the Grace of God it can be done. We as a family, can honestly say with Paul, the Apostle, "I have the strength to face all conditions by the power that Christ gives me."

Did they celebrate her birthday today? Did he make first string on the basketball team? Who won the game last night???

Laurie Bowers —

LAST NIGHT WHILE I was cleaning out a bunch of junk, I came upon an old note one of my friends had written last year. In one part of it, it went, "Do you think our hostel is (check at least five): exciting, boring, fun, restricted, educational, lenient, good and your choice!"

I think that I could have honestly checked all of them. It may sound contradictory to say that something could be both exciting and boring. But I've found that after being at the hostel and hearing everyone yelling and screaming; music (ranging from classical to country western) blaring from all corners; people playing pingpong in the rec room; swinging on the swing outside; and the running and laughter up on the roof on a Friday night and then the dead silence that comes the next afternoon when everyone's either asleep, at school or over at their girlfriends; you can really believe it!

BECAUSE THERE ARE so many of us living family-style, the little fun things we do become big group projects. Take for instance, at Halloween this year. Some of the girls in our hostel organized a mystery supper for all three hostels in the city. It took a lot of work to get everything organized enough so that we could get some 80 people to eat all sorts of wierd food, but it turned out okay. Or, the Christmas party we had in which we put on skits. Even really small things like making Sandy Bertsche a birthday card was an all-hostel affair one night after supper.

Sure we have clashes too, what with some of the "littler" girls always bickering at each other; the "big guys" liking to exercise their "authority" over the ones of us that are a bit younger; and the hostel parents putting their foot down on something they "let us do last time" or that "the other hostel parents let us do." But that's just part of living together. In any family set-up you're going to have some problems.

BY LEARNING HOW (and how not) to get along, one begins to learn how to cope with other people that are outside your "real" family, but that you are still in close contact with.

I guess that the whole hostel life is a learning experience. Because you're away from your parents alot of the time, you learn to be independent sooner. You learn a lot of things without your parents around to help you out or warn you of things or to keep you motivated. You have to get out and do it yourself. I don't know, there are so many things you learn from being away from your parents, but I guess that one of the big things for me is that I've come alot closer to my parents. Since we aren't together much, we try to really make use of the time that we do have. I think that it really helps to be away from them once in a while because you really learn to appreciate them and see them as human beings.

I GUESS THE BEST way to sum up the life in the hostel would be to say that it's like one big family. There are times when we work together and have lots of fun. But there are also times when you wish you could just pack up and go home.

STILL, I THINK it's an experience that everyone should try at least once.

Listenin

"Since we aren't to, really make use of have... you really l (your parents) and beings."

Philip N

IF ONE WERE TO ASK
Hostel about the advantages a
living at home, one would get a
are people. Everyone has a diff
the hostel, and mine is no bette
Like everyone's viewpoints, m
personality and length of time a
so many different things, it's
hostel for about 5 1/2 years n

As for negative things al perennial complaint. Whenever almost invariably make a mer eat. The reasons are obvious; I mouths to feed make most host awhile.

Along with food, for me, the over home life has to do with policy, kids may not have big hostel. For a 17-year-old seni problem, especially in a spray much running around needs to

Laurie Bowers attends the American School of Kinshasa (TASOK) and lives in the AIMM Hostel. Her parents are Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Bowers who are stationed at Kimpese with Mission Aviation Fellowship.

To ...

her much, we try to he time that we do n to appreciate them ee them as human Laurie Bowers

rtens —

the people living in the AIMM disadvantages of hostel life over any different responses as there ent viewpoint from which he sees can anyone else's, just different. is biased by my age, interests, he hostel. As for me, I'm 17, I like at to count, and I've been at the

the hostel, food must be the ople talk about going home, they of how well they are going to budget, bulk buying, and many tes wish for mom's cooking after

ggest disadvantage of hostel life isportation. According to hostel les, motorcycles, or cars at the poy, this poses somewhat of a gity like Kinshasa, where so lone to do anything.

Two MKs share some of their feelings about living away from home.

NOW THAT I'VE SAID some negative things about hostel life, I'd like to point out some positive aspects.

First of all, I think one of the biggest benefits I've gotten out of the hostel is learning to live with and put up with people. To some extent this can be learned at home, but when twenty kids live all under the same roof, the lesson of tolerance is really emphasized. When you have to live with that many kids for a couple of years, you learn how to get along, and if you don't, things can be pretty rough. If someone bugs you, you get to learn to ignore what bugs you about him, one way or another. I think this is one lesson, if none other, that the hostel teaches well.

Companionship is another plus of the hostel scene. Only by living with a person can you really get to know him. In a hostel, you really can learn to know people of your own age group, people you can really relate to. Some of these friendships are very close, and in any case they seem to last well after the people leave the hostel, as shown by how much missionary kids get together in the States. These kinds of solid friendships are one hostel asset that I know I won't fully appreciate until I'm older.

Finally, the hostel makes me have a stronger appreciation of my parents than when I'm at home all the time. Being away from them makes our times together more enjoyable, and we don't get on each other's nerves as much. Living at home I think, kids take their parents for granted, but at the hostel, you are always aware of them by their absence.

IF I VIEW MY HOSTEL experience as a whole, the good times outweigh the bad, and what I've learned is very valuable. This doesn't mean, however, that I would choose hostel life over home life if given the choice, but it does mean that I see the hostel as an upbuilding and strengthening experience. All in all, my more than 5 years at the hostel have been very enjoyable, especially the last few, even though things aren't always the way I would like them to be. It takes time to adjust at first, but after that it gets better all the time. I believe that I'm a better person for my stay here at the hostel, and I think it can really be a good experience if the person is willing to adapt and to take on a loving and accepting attitude.

"It can be a really good experience if the person is willing to adapt and to take on a loving and accepting attitude."

Philip Martens

Philip Martens attends the American School of Kinshasa (TASOK) and lives in the AIMM Hostel. He is a senior. His parents are Rev. and Mrs. Rudolph Martens who are AIMM missionaries stationed at Kalonda working with the Bible Institute and medical work.

THAT

My

Was

Turning off my alarm at 5:30 I roll further into my pillow thinking how nice it is to wake up to the sound of rain. Seconds later realization sweeps in — that's no rain, it's the shower in the little girls bathroom. And my imagined thunder rumblings are closet doors banging and hairdryers buzzing. Wondering what on earth my little chicks have to do of such urgence that they need to get up forty-five minutes early, I swing out of bed, bracing myself for what could be "one of those days."

Its being my day to fix breakfast, I fumble downstairs, open doors, set tables and get the cook started on frying fifty-five pieces of French Toast. Five minutes before breakfast is supposed to be served, I discover the milk is sour and the bananas were eaten the night before. While mixing fresh milk and opening canned peaches, two kids come flying in yelling that the dog is having her pups and to COME AND SEE!! Postponing the pleasure, I manage to get everyone to breakfast which is consumed in the usual 7.5 minutes.



I... am accosted by the laundry man who is irritated that the dryer isn't working — again.



It's my day to fix breakfast . . .

I rise from the table and am accosted simultaneously by the laundry man, who is irritated to the hilt that the dryer isn't working again; a high schooler who needs a pair of cutoffs stitched immediately because they are unrayeling to an indecent height and a little girl whose emergency medical form has to be filled in and handed back three days ago. By the time I remedy what I can of those situations, three more kids are standing in line with report cards to be signed, someone else desperately needs a notebook from the student store, another wants a sandwich packed for mid-morning snack and the original dog lovers are still insisting that I COME AND SEE the pups being born. I start maneuvering kids toward the bus, fearing they'll be late for school. Between receiving instructions on what pills to bring for whom at lunch and reassuring the excited "godparents" that I will feed the mama dog I get everyone on the bus and on the way.

Day

Today

Sandra Bertsche

It's 7:20.

Back into the house, I start scraping peanut butter off the breakfast tables at which precise moment a neighbor drops in with a letter to give to an unidentified person coming later to pick up some suitcases. I thank that neighbor and am vainly trying to locate said suitcases when an enormous MCC truck loaded with fuel barrels lumbers into the vard. I return to the vard to see what now and discover another neighbor to whose yard the truck was **supposed** to have gone already redirecting the drivers. The laundry man joins the scene to remind me that I still have done nothing about the dryer. As I go to see about replacing the fuse, a VW bus roars up, screeching to a halt directly in my path. I see that it's a friend from another hostel coming for the semi-weekly market trip and I remember it's my turn to go. Dashing around, I gather baskets, bags, money, market lists and join the marketers. As we drive out, I hear the neighbor's voice calling hysterically for help across her fence: her dog just chewed a hole in the MCC truck driver's leg.

It's only 8:00.

Marketing continued in the style set for the day. At the bakery, I am booed and hissed because my order of ten big loaves, one hundred buns, five round and seven French loaves fairly well cleans the shelves. At the market I have a lengthy discussion with my banana ladies who insist that I should pay them a little bonus since I'm such a good client.... I finally end the discussion by paying them their matabish because I'm late already and have things in my basket that need to be cooked for lunch. Once home, after fighting through "have to see it to believe it Kinshasa traffic", there is just time to help Sandee finish lunch and pack it up for the haul to school.



My bakery order fairly well cleans the shelves . . .

School's out. I give four piano lessons; trot to a nearby pharmacy where rumor has it, there is baking soda on sale which we're flat out of; make a couple of bus trips to pick up kids from school, while Lorin and Sandee take a toothache case to the dentist and represent the AIMM hostel at the school board meeting. Going to start supper preparations as usual at 4:45 I find four middle school girls in the kitchen frying six hundred tortillas for a Taco feed they are helping sponsor. In

spite of the ice skating rink state of the floor, and finding that a whole gallon of mango sauce has fermented which calls for a quick menu revision (can we sneak beans in for the 4th time without their noticing?????), we do manage to have supper at 5:30. Also at 5:30 it begins to rain and when we count heads at the tables, two are missing. I locate the two out by the dog; they can't persuade the new mother to come in out of the rain so they aren't coming in out of the rain either.

Supper over and time for devotions. I see to it later that the KP group is well underway with cleanup, then scramble up to take a shower and study a few more Lingala phrases before class at 7:00. Five minutes before class starts, the dentist patient appears; he has slept through supper without my missing him and wants supper served now . . .



Returning at 9:00, head spinning after two hours of "elasiki nini ozali . . . " I find that the girls have not yet begun to think of preparing for their 9:30 bedtime. I haul unwilling kids off the swing and tennis court, out of the library and rec room, to the showers and begin the nightly ritual of bringing glasses of water to all ten of my girls. After picking up mounds of dirty clothes and towels out of the halls, politely refusing to serve one girl her bedtime snack in the shower, handing out throat lozenges and Pepto Bismol, listening to the last expostulations and exclamations about the day's happenings, and saying good night to each one in turn, I finally make my way to my room at the end of the hall. One shoe off, I turn to find a younger girl in the doorway in tears. A run-in with some fellow hostelites earlier in the evening has resulted in still unresolved hurt and indignations. A few minutes taken to talk it through, to think why the argument happened and to devise ways a future run-in might be avoided. The sobbing calms and stops. Satisfied, sleepy, I see this last one back to her room and into bed. Quiet finally and really descends.

SUCH contentment to collapse — semi comatose into my own bed around 10:30. At times, irritating, hectic, challenging, satisfying, ridiculous, hilarious, unbelievable — WHATEVER. THAT Was My Day Today!

After picking up mounds of dirty clothes and towels, etc., etc., etc., etc. (!), I finally make my way to my room . . .



WITH THE LORD

Peacefully on December 27, 1976, Olga Klassen, wife of John and mother of Ben, Miriam and April, slipped away to be with the Lord.

John and Olga Klassen of Laird, Saskatchewan first went to Zaire under AIMM sponsorship in the summer of 1965 having spent the previous year in language study in Bruxelles, Belgium. Trained as teachers, they were assigned to their first two terms to Nyanga where John first taught and eventually served as director of the Nyanga church-related high school.

During a lengthened furlough from 1970 to 1972, John pursued his work for a Masters Degree. Returning to Zaire in the fall of 1972, they were assigned to Mukedi Station where both he and Olga taught in the school system under an African Director. Olga also taught Miriam and April, two adopted daughters.

Olga was an exemplary mother, wife and homemaker, ideally suited to the Zairian bush. Coming from sturdy, rural Mennonite stock she displayed resourcefulness and innovation. She soon learned how to use the food resources of the surrounding countryside to the best possible advantage. Her commitment both to her Lord and her call to missionary service was unswerving.

The funeral service was held on December 31 at the Eigenheim Church, near Saskatoon, in John's home community.



CALLED AND SENT ...

Vernon and Phyllis Lehman Leave For Bruxelles

Vernon and Phyllis Lehman with sons Philip (12) and Douglas (9) left for Bruxelles, Belgium in late February to study French for five months before heading for Kinshasa. The Lehmans are assigned to be hostel parents at the AIMM/MB hostel in Kinshasa. They plan to arrive at the hostel in late July.

The Lehmans have been life long residents of Kidron, Ohio and are members of the Salem Mennonite Church. They will be supported by the Commission on Overseas Missions of the General Conference Mennonite Church.



Rockes Head for Zaire

David, Catherine and Deanna Rocke left in late March for Zaire. They went to Zaire at the invitation of the CMZA to serve in construction and maintenance. Their first assignment will be to build a Christian Literature Center.

David grew up in Zaire where his parents, Glenn and Ina Rocke serve as AIMM missionaries.

The Rockes will be supported by the Evangelical Mennonite Church.







Stan and Lorri Nussbaum Take Up Lesotho Assignment

The latest missionary personnel to go to Lesotho to serve in a Bible teaching ministry are Stan and Lorri Nussbaum.

Stan and Lorri both graduated from Taylor University where Stan was a Philosophy major and Lorri a Psychology major. Stan also graduated from Trinity Seminary with degrees of M. Div. and M.A. in Church History.

Since graduation, Stan has served as director of Christian Education of the Evangelical Mennonite Church, Lorri has developed a Christian Day Center at the Pine Hills EMC Church where they've ministered and carried their membership.

In addition to serving in Bible teaching ministries, it is anticipated that they will work with the development of Christian Education materials for use among the churches of Lesotho.

The Nussbaums left for Southern Africa in late February with their two children, Anjila 3½ and Adam five months.



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Rev. and Mrs. Peter Falk 24 Rampart Drive St. Catherines, Ontario L2P 1T4

Frieda Guengerich 8611 North 67th Ave. Glendale, AZ 85302

Ms. Marjorle Neuenschwander 6830 Ramblewood Drive Apt. E Ft. Wayne, IN 46815

Rev. and Mrs. George Neufeld Box 183 Inman, KS 67546 Mr. John Klaassen 1667 Empire Ave. Saskatoon, Sask. S7K 3E9

Rev. and Mrs. Earl Roth 3695 Cooley Dr. N.E. Salem, OR 97303

Dr. and Mrs. Merle Schwartz 811 Osage Street Normal, IL 61761

Rev. and Mrs. Don Unruh 20 Columbus Circle Newton, KS 67114

Rev. and Mrs. Irvin Friesen Box 246 Palapye, Botswana Southern Africa Ms. Anita Janzen B.P. 205 IMCK Kananga via Kinshasa Republic of Zaire

Mr. and Mrs. Stan Nussbaum P.O. Box MS365 Maseru, Lesotho Southern Africa

Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Lehman 26 Rue Alphonse Asselbergs 1180 Bruxelles, Belgium

Mr. and Mrs. David Rocke B.P. 1 Tshikapa via Kinshasa Republic of Zaire

Dr. and Mrs. Dennis Ries B.P. 1 Tshikapa via Kinshasa Republic of Zaire

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FEW AMONG US will call into question the fundamental imperative of outreach that is inherent in the life and teachings of our Lord. Most of us will also readily accept that this commission applies to the entire human race and, therefore, can take the messengers of the Good News into the remotest areas of the globe.

But missionaries are people, both single and married; and married couples, even though missionaries, also long to experience the miracle of the reproduction of their own flesh and blood. They, too, long for their own family circles made complete by their own children.

Those who stand in the Roman Catholic tradition maintain celibacy as a norm for the servants of the church defending this stance, among others, on the basis of the greater flexibility and mobility it permits for its personnel. In the Protestant tradition, however, while recognizing and appreciating the tremendous contribution made through the years by single women, it has generally been accepted that the very act and process of living as a family under the all-seeing eyes of the surrounding community can be in and of itself an effective form of witness and influence.

BUT THERE ARE VERY REAL PROBLEMS to be faced by missionary families none of which is more crucial than the education of their children. Although missionary mothers frequently organize themselves to teach the children of their mission community for the first few years of primary school, sooner or later the families must face the unavoidable issue of ongoing education. In earlier years, many families faced a grim choice, i.e. to either leave their young children behind on successive furloughs in the homeland or to abandon their missionary calling. (Some families found a way between the options by guiding children in the use of correspondence materials.) In later years, however, at least a partial solution was developed in the establishing of schools and hostels for missionary children. Typically located either in an urban center or at a station central to their mission areas, grade and high school age children quickly find themselves following an annual schedule similar to that of an American college student i.e. away at school and in the hostel all year except for Christmas, Easter, and summer breaks. It goes without saying that such an arrangement places heavy demands on missionary parents to try to maintain and nurture bonds of love, influence, and support though separated much of the time. Heavy responsibility also falls on the hostel parents who must seek to respond to emotional and spiritual needs in lieu of missionary parents.

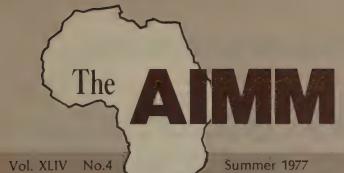
FREQUENT STUDIES made of missionary children and their reintegration into the life and culture of the homeland as young adults tend to be critical. It is granted that MK's develop commendable tolerance for other peoples and cultures and also learn to make decisions on their own earlier in life. It is further noted that they are unusually knowledgeable as they've benefited much from the travel and exposure of missionary life which in and of itself is an educational process. But beyond this, it is that many missionary children have major adjustment problems as they return to the homeland as college age young adults.

It is true that for whatever combination of factors it may be, there has been heartache in the life and experience of some missionary families. But what is often not mentioned in such studies is that for every such experience in a missionary family, there are several others experienced by christian families living in stable communities who have never disrupted the life tempo of their children. It would seem apparent that abandoning missionary service in order to afford the greater stability of family life at home is in and of itself no automatic guarantee as to the emotional and spiritual welfare of the children in question.

ADMITTING THAT THE REARING and nurturing of children in a context of missionary service adds some real difficulties not normally encountered in more stable circumstances, it does not necessarily follow that it is impossible. Indeed to say this is to imply that a married couple cannot serve as long term missionaries and still be good parents at the same time. Crucial to this whole issue are two factors: first the parent's ability to develop deep bonds of love and mutual respect with children from infancy on and, second, to have available to them adequate hostel situations staffed by qualified, perceptive folk who are capable of loving, caring, listening, and nurturing the Mk's who come to them thus enabling their parents to continue their ministries of proclamation, instruction, and compassion in the isolated areas of their calling.

Easy? No. Possible? Yes, but only given the proper facilities and staff, adequate parental influence and love, and your prayers.

James Bertsche



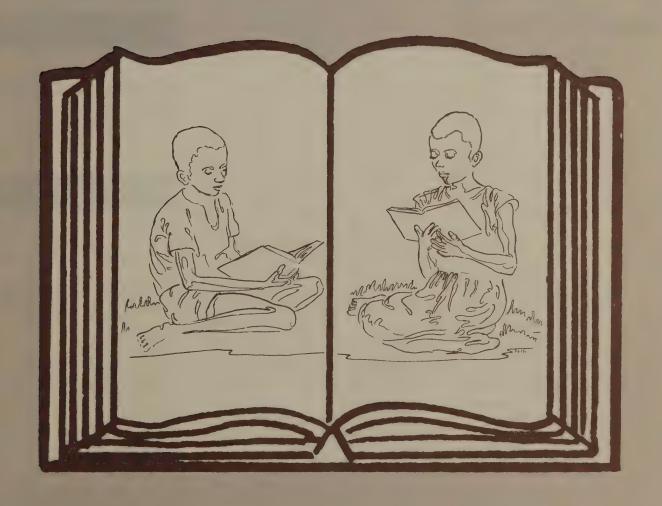
MESSENGER

Summer 1977

Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, Inc.



God's Word in African Tongues



Translation Work In Zaire

In This Issue . . .



MOST PEOPLE read a magazine from front cover to back cover. Somewhere along the line I picked up the habit of reading from back cover to front cover! Just this once I wish you'd do the same. I'm not asking you to do it this way entirely, but I do hope you'll turn to page 15 before you begin to read at the beginning. There is a brief introduction to a few names you'll be bumping into while reading about translation work in Zaire.

JOHN ELLINGTON is the Translations Consultant for the United Bible Societies in Zaire. On page 3 he reviews what is being done; how and why; in the area of translation in one corner of the world: Zaire.

PASTOR GHYMALU KIANZA is a gifted leader and translator working with the Zaire Mennonite Church. He writes about his experience of translating the Bible into Giphende. Read what he has to say on page 10.

MISSIONARY BEN EIDSE answers the question, "Why a new Chokwe translation?" on page 5.

He writes of some of the problems encountered and solutions found in his translation project.

KHEGE MWATA-SWANA is Ben Eidse's good friend and righthand man in this project. He expresses some thoughts and feelings about the Word of God and how it helps him and his people.

MANY THANK YOU's go to Faith Eidse (daughter of Ben and Helen) for her artistic help in producing the front cover. Also, credit for the excellent photos on page 5 and 6 is given to Mr. Dave K. Schellenberg, editor of the Evangelical Mennonite Conference (Steinbach) MESSENGER. I'm so pleased that we can involve more and more talent in the work of AIMM.

AGNES SPRUNGER was one of the first missionaries to go to the Belgian Congo in 1916 under the Congo Inland Mission (later named Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission). Although she was a medical missionary, she found herself deeply involved with translating portions of the Bible, Gospel songs and lessons into Giphende which was at that time an unwritten language. By 1953, when she retired, she had translated the entire Bible into Giphende with the help of her African colleagues. From what I've read, she was a remarkable lady who was very dedicated to serving the Lord. See page 14 for the story.

Again, Editor Jim Bertsche has aptly summarized this issue in his editorial, "God's Word In African Tongues."

- S. Barkman

Editor James Bertsche Assistant Editor Sue Barkman

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Bible Translation in one corner of the world

John Ellington

RECENTLY AT A meeting in Nairobi, Kenya about a dozen men and women sat around tables and discussed the future of Bible translation in Africa. Most of those present had PhDs in either Linguistics, Anthropology or Theology. They are translation consultants for sub-Sahara Africa and are charged with the oversight of more than one hundred and thirty translation projects in that part of the world. In order to subsidize projects where churches involved are unable to support the full cost of the translation, a budget of more than \$200,000 was approved. This will make it possible for the Word of God to be translated for the first time in many languages. It will also allow new translations in many other languages to go ahead. All of this is being done under the sponsorship of the United Bible Societies.

The name "United Bible Societies" is a new one to many in North America. We have been familiar with the work of the American Bible Society and the Canadian Bible Society. We have also heard of the British and Foreign Bible Society and perhaps some other European societies. What we often fail to realize is that these well known Bible societies came together in 1946 to form the U.B.S. Today more than fifty national Bible societies operating in 150 countries of the world are vital members of the U.B.S. The U.B.S. is a coordinating body. It is a partnership responsible for planning, policy-making, financing and carrying out the important worldwide Bible work. Its task includes the translation, production and

John Ellington is the Translations Consultant for the United Bible Societies in The Republic of Zaire. distribution of the Word of God in the languages of the people. It is often said that the aim is to provide every person with a Bible in a language he can understand and at a price he can afford.

This calls for subsidized prices on the one hand, and on the other hand it requires expertise in the area of translation.

IN ZAIRE THERE are more than two hundred distinct languages. These are not just "dialects", but separate languages at least as different as Portuguese and Spanish for example. To be sure, many of them are closely related, but they are different languages and must be dealt with as such. At present only thirteen of these Zairian languages have the complete Bible. Another fourteen languages have only the New Testament. Smaller portions and selections have been translated into nearly thirty additional languages, but most of these publications are now out of print. In this great, but sometimes troubled nation, the task of Bible Translation is overwhelming. There are frequent and urgent requests for new translations, but often they have to be rejected because of lack of funds or qualified personnel.

Linguistically the Republic of Zaire is composed of three distinct strata. The official language of the country is French. This was the language imposed by the Belgian colonial authorities and retained by the newly independent "Democratic Republic of Congo." In 1967 the name of the country was changed to the Republic of Zaire and there was a strong trend toward the abolition of non-African items imported into Zairian culture. Nevertheless, for purposes of national unity the French language has been retained. Many Bibles and other scripture portions in French are distributed each year.

ON ANOTHER LEVEL, there are four so-called national languages. These are major languages used for inter-ethnic communication. They are often described as "trade languages." These trade languages are: Lingala, Swahili, Tshiluba and Kikongo. Virtually every one of Zaire's 21 million people speak at least one of these four languages.

The first complete Bible in a Zairian language was the *Nkand'a Nzambi vo Masonukwa Manlongo* which appeared in Kikongo in 1905. In 1927 the first Bible in Tshiluba was published. The year of Congo independence, 1960, saw

the publication of the first complete Bible in "Congo Swahili," or Kingwana, as it was then called. Lingala speakers got their Bibles only 1970. These translations have undergone partial or complete revision over the past years, but since they are all based on older principles of translation, they remain fairly literal renderings.

In the early 1960's Dr. Eugene A. Nida, Research Coordinator for the American Bible Society began to promote the idea of *dynamic* equivalence. This approach to

In Zaire there are more than 200 distinct languages.

translation places emphasis on the meaning of scripture and plays down the importance of formal correspondence between the source and receptor languages. When these new techniques are used in translating the Word of God, people invariably find it more readable and understandable. As a result of this revolution in the science of translation, new projects have been started in the four major languages of Zaire. These are not just revisions of existing translations. They are fresh, new renderings of the scriptures. Within a year, new translations of the New Testament will be available in each of the major languages and work is going ahead on the Old Testament.

The Word of God in the language of the people.

THE TRIBAL LANGUAGES make up the third linguistic level in Zaire today. Each ethnic group has its own language. Such groups may be composed of as few as 10,000 speakers in some cases and as many as a million or more in others. Many of them have never had any scripture in their own language.

Two important languages in this third category are Chokwe and Giphende; languages in which the

AIMM is directly involved. The first bit of scripture to appear in Giphende was the Gospel according to Luke, translated by Agnes Sprunger and Alma E. Doring in 1926. This was followed four years later by a mimeographed edition of Matthew. In 1935 the entire New Testament was published by the British and Foreign Bible Society in London. This had been the work of a team of missionaries and Africans including Agnes Sprunger, Beulah MacMillan Amie, Erma Birky, Filipo Kafuatu, Yosefe Kitembe, Yone Kapenda and Yakoba Kituku.

Just about the time of independence of the former Belgian Congo in 1960, work began on a revision of this earlier translation. Rev. James Bertsche and Kipoko David headed up this work and were eventually assisted by Pastor Ghymalu Kianza. The revised New Testament is now being printed by the U.B.S. European Production Fund in Stuttgart, Germany. It is expected to be in the hands of the Baphende people within a matter of months.

WITH THE COMPLETION of the New Testament revision, the translation of the Old Testament started immediately. This work is being done primarily by Pastor Ghymalu Kianza assisted by a number of African and missionary revisers. The project is now being supervised by Dr. John Ellingtor, Translations Consultant for Central Africa. The manuscript of Genesis and Exodus has already been received in Kinshasa and these two important historical books are to be printed early next year. The Giphende team has also completed the translation of Jeremiah. And they have rough drafts of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I and II Samual, I Kings, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther. In spite of the fact that Pastor Ghymalu has recently been given other responsibilities outside the area of Bible translation by the General Assembly of the church, the work on the rest of the Old Testament appears to be moving along

The Chokwe language is spread over a large area including parts of eastern Angola and southwestern Shaba. It is spoken by more than a half million persons. Early work on the Chokwe Bible was done by the Garanganze Brethren, or "Christian Missions in Many Lands." The Gospel of John appeared as early as 1916 and work progressed steadily on the New

continued on page 7

at a fairly good rate.



Photo by Dave K. Schellenberg

The Commitment To Communication

Why A New Chokwe Translation?

Ben Eidse

"Why a new Chokwe translation?" I asked myself as we were approached by the Bible society about our availability for such an assignment. Oh, I knew that the Chokwe people had a great deal of difficulty understanding their New Testament, particularly the epistles, but I wasn't at all convinced that another translation would make it appreciably different.

However, that was before I had attended a translation seminar, before I had been introduced to current principles and procedures in translating the Bible; before we had seen the reaction of the local people to the first dittoed pages of our new translation; before we had witnessed the response of the Chokwe in distant Shaba province and more recently in neighboring Angola.

Why a new Chokwe translation? Because of our qualifications? Definitely not, for like my

colleague Pastor Ghymalu, I felt very inadequate for the task. Rather, it is because changes in translation principles and procedures have gained momentum and acceptance largely since the previous work was done. Let's take a brief look at these principles and procedures as well as the desired end-product.

The Principles of Biblical Translation Have Changed

Formal Equivalence Principles

For years the formal equivalence approach to Bible translation dominated the field, though there were some notable exceptions. Martin Luther, for instance was way ahead of his time as **Die Biebel** so clearly reflects. But generally speaking, the translator tried to reproduce as closely as possible the form or structure of the source language (Hebrew and Greek mainly) into the receptor language (the one into which he was translating). Often word-for-word translations were aimed for

That is how we translated the Scriptures in our Greek classes at Seminary and that, I thought, was exactly what was needed to get the Biblical message across

accurately. It was only later that I learned that such an approach flies straight into the face of some basic principles of communication — at least for other than Greek students.

Sentences in Greek are exceptionally long; see Ephesians 1 in the King James Version for instance. Few languages permit the Greek sentence structure. In this kind of a translation, people may understand every word, and may even be able to read quite well, and yet not comprehend because the sentence structure is too foreign. In fact, it has been pointed out that earlier translations did not necessarily aim for understanding. "Let the Bible Societies translate, and let the churches interpret." The trouble is, that it is not quite that simple. Every translator is an interpreter.

Not only do we have a problem of comprehension here, but also that of naturalness. King James Chokwe is certainly not natural Chokwe. It's definitely not the way people speak. How strong would be the motivation to read this kind of literature?

Correct formal reproduction also frequently results in incorrect understanding

of the actual message, especially in the case of figures of speech, notably metaphors. "Go tell that fox..." (Luke 13:32) was interpreted by our translation team as being a curse; after all Jesus telling Herod that he is an animal!

Dynamic Equivalence Principles

It was at a seminar in Kinshasa that we were introduced to another approach to translation. We learned that our goal in translating the New Testament into Chokwe was to try to produce the same kind of reaction among the Chokwe people today that the original Biblical authors were aiming for among their first century Greek readers. In other words, we should strive for the same dynamic effects. The farther the new reader is removed from the author and his readers in time, place and situation, the harder it is to get the equivalent reaction, while still remaining true to the author. A good dynamic equivalence translation will reveal the cultural gap and should stir the reader to seek to bridge that gap.

The original author, original readers, and new readers are all of utmost importance. Their situation, language style and level are all vital — and so is the content of the message.

Since communication has top priority and understanding the message is most essential, slavish adherence to the structure of the source language is not required though *there must be fidelity to content*. The translation should be oriented to the receptor language and toward the reader.

The superiority of dynamic equivalence over the formal equivalence was on one occasion impressed upon me forcefully when I was given the assignment to translate from French to English, an explanation of a new water softener. I

There must be fidelity to the content.

could not translate the brochure until I understood how the softener worked. Then, too, even though French and English are similar languages, it was obvious that only a dynamic equivalence translation would be of any value.

The Procedure Of Translation Has Changed

The first procedural change is the translation orientation course provided for prospective translators which consists of an indoctrination in dynamic equivalence principles coupled with practical assignments.

As far as actual translation work is concerned, digging into the text has always been important, but in this approach it is even more so, because of the commitment to communication. Word studies in both source and receptor languages are crucial. Digging into the Word is still largely my responsibility, though the contributions of co-workers Khege and Mutunda are often a real help.

The previous Chokwe translation, the actual formulating of phrases and sentences was done by a foreigner, the missionary. Now it's done by a Chokwe whose mother tongue is the receptor language. This does not mean that I cannot help make the translation a more natural Chokwe — this is especially true after several years' experience. My job is to constantly ask questions that force the indigenous translator to recall common village communication or to go and consult other clan members.

The translating committee and other groups, including non-Christians, play a more dominating role than in the former approach. Our aim is to make the translation the product of a variety of people. The translations consultant now plays a more important role as well. He keeps on drawing our attention to passages that do not communicate accurately or naturally.

In order to bridge the gap between present day readers and those of the first century we must often make explicit what is implicit in the text. Example: a large animal, the camel. Culturally illuminating pictures and maps also serve the same purpose.

In the dynamic equivalence approach, analysing and translating non-literal language is given much more attention than in the older method. Metaphors pose a particular difficulty and demand very careful investigation. In the book **The Bible Translator**, Jacob Loewen says, "The proper handling of figurative language and other non-literal meanings is possibly the most important element in making a good translation."

The Product Of Translation Has Changed

With this change of principles and procedure, it is obvious that the product should also be different. In putting some of the above sketched principles into practice, we were led to make many changes in the Chokwe Bible. For instance in an effort to have as faithful and literal a translation as possible, the original translators used transliterations or fabricated words for beings which were strange to the Chokwe culture. While they came up with words which resembled either Greek or English spelling, they were words with zero meaning for the Chokwe people.

We must make explicit what is implicit in the text.

In working with metaphorical passages, we made changes so as to make explicit the basic meaning of the passage. For instance in Luke 13:32, we translated: "Go tell that coyote, that destroyer..." In John 6:35 we translated "I am the bread that makes people become alive." And in Romans 12:20 the passage now reads: "If you do this you will give him shame and burn him with fire."

If dynamic equivalence principles are consistently put into practice a translation should be: ACCURATE — reproducing faithfully the biblical message; COMPREHENSIBLE — to the readers for whom it was intended; NATURAL — written the way it is ordinarily said; MOTIVATING — inspiring readers and audiences to action. We trust that to a certain extent we have realized these goals and therefore we believe this translation serves a necessary purpose.

Below: Ben Eidse and Khege Mwata-Swana working on the new Chokwe translation at Kamayala in Zaire. **Right:** *I to r* Helen Eidse, Ben Eidse and daughter Charity (Mrs. John Schellenberg) work on the new Chokwe translation during furlough at Steinbach, Manitoba.





Following, in three columns, are some of these terms given first in English, then in the original transliterated Chokwe form, and finally in the revised form as it is being used in our Chokwe translation now.

Holy Spirit Satan angels apostles demons Amen

Spiritu Musandu Satana angelo apostolo andemoniu Amene the set-apart spirit the chief deceiver messengers of heaven messengers of Jesus unclean spirits so let it be, please

Bible Translation In One Corner Of the World - from page 4

Testament until its publication in 1927. In that same year the Psalms were also published by the British and Foreign Bible Society. Because of requirements by the Portuguese colonial government in Angola, many of the Chokwe Scripture publications appeared in diglot form with Chokwe and Portuguese on opposite pages. The entire Chokwe Bible was printed in 1970 and has been used since that time by Christians in Shaba and Bandundu provinces in Zaire as well as in eastern Angola.

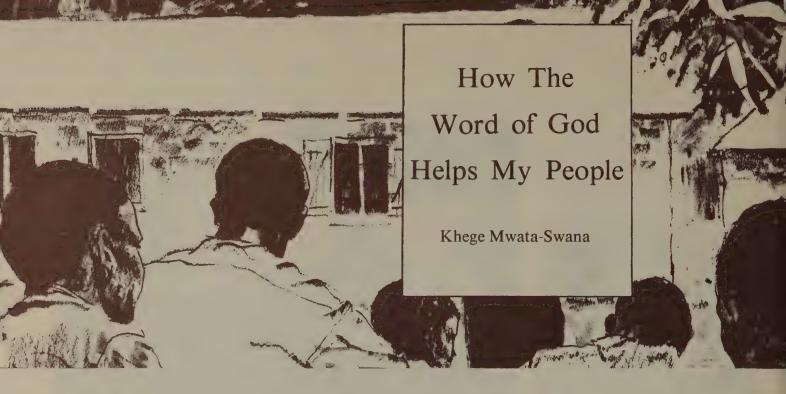
WITH THE ADVENT of modern principles of dynamic equivalent translation, AIMM missionary Ben Eidse had a vision. While the older translation was a faithful rendering of the original, it was sometimes difficult to understand. Rev. Eidse envisioned a

new translation into modern idiomatic Chokwe equivalent to the Good News For Modern Man which first appeared in America in 1966. Under the supervision of Dr. Harold W. Fehderau, then Translations Consultant for Zaire, and with the help of Pastor Khege, he set out to realize this dream. Today the manuscript of the new Chokwe New Testament is being checked by a copy editor in Kinshasa and some time next year it is hoped that this dynamic translation will be on sale in Zaire and Angola. It is not intended to replace the earlier Chokwe Bible, but will be offered as an alternative to those who find the more formal translation difficult to understand, and as an additional source to be used together with the earlier work in Bible study.

At the same time, work is progressing on the Old Testament. Pastor Khege is now assisted by Mr. Mutunda Funda from Shaba who has lived for a number of years in Angola. Ben Eidse continued to oversee this work. First draft translations of every book in the Old Testament except Job and Isaiah have been completed. And while a great deal of revision remains to be done on the books already translated, we can look forward to a dynamic translation of the entire Bible in Chokwe within a few years.

The Word of God in the language of the people: this has been the aim of the United Bible Societies throughout the world. In at least one corner of the world Zaire the AIMM is working hand in hand with the Bible societies

to fulfill that goal.



THE BIBLE DIFFERS from other books. Other books record the thoughts and deeds of men, but the Bible records the thoughts and acts of God. Therefore these words are helpful to my people in many ways.

In these last years we have been able to hear and read God's Word in the language of our birth. So the Lord speaks to us in our tongue as He spoke to our ancestors Adam and Eve in theirs.

The Word of God teaches us to know Christ

Our ancestors believed in God. But with our own knowledge and wisdom we could not get to know Christ who became man, the Lord of Life who was raised from the dead.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus teaches us that we are to take Him as the bread of life. We eat bread to stay alive physically and in a spiritual sense we eat Christ the bread, to stay alive spiritually forever.

The Word of God teaches us to know the way of salvation

In Romans 10:14, 15, it explains very clearly how the Word of God came to my people and helped us to find the way of salvation. "How are men to call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent? As it is

written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!' "

Only faith in Christ could bring salvation to my people. He is the door, the only door or entrance to heaven. Faith is like a path that we take to reach the grace of God. Faith is the stretched out hand that expects to receive something. My people have stretched out their hands and have received the gift of salvation promised to us in the Gospel.

The Word of God teaches us to know the will of God

If we want to know what someone thinks, we have to get in touch with him; get to know him; start asking questions and listening to his answers. Sometimes it takes many days or even years to get to know someone. The only way for us to know God and His Will is to know His Word, the Bible.

By knowing the Word of God and following the Will of God, many things have changed among the Chokwe people. It used to be dangerous for a boy or girl to go on a journey of 10 kilometers or more unaccompanied. We had many enemies — even among our own tribe. A man might come along and recognize the boy and say to himself, "This is so-and-so's son. Here is my chance to get even with his father." And he would kill the boy. Or someone might come along and think, "Here comes a stranger. I need a human heart to fix my witchcraft

Let us go to the Word daily to receive from it all the help God offers us.

medicine to make it strong. It is better to kill this stranger than a child from our vicinity." Now that there are Christians scattered throughout this territory and in all the villages, the danger is gone. I can send my son alone on a long journey without fear.

Christians have the reputation that they are people of love. A man from our village got lost in a hunt in the rain. When the rain stopped and the stars came out he found his way to the road and to a village. He noticed one house where the people were still up. He hoped it would be a Christian home and that he could get something to eat. But it wasn't. The people did not even move over to give him a place by the fire to warm and dry himself.

God wants us to love one another and this admonition has helped us to fellowship in the same church with people who used to be our enemies. Often we pastors have to help settle quarrels between Christians. We use the Word of God to teach them what God requires of them. His will is that we should live together peacefully and in unity of spirit.

The Word of God teaches us to know what is to come in the future

Fear spoils people's lives. The fear of what will happen to us in sickness and death has caused us to be the slaves of many taboos. These taboos, instead of helping the situation, just caused us trouble and still could not free us from fear of the future.

Now we have the Word of God; His plan of salvation for us, eternal life. In Matthew 10:28, Christ teaches us not to fear those who can only hurt our bodies.

In Romans 8 we learn that "... all things work together for our good when we love God." Knowing these verses help us to overcome the fears of our daily life and the immediate future. There are many other chapters and verses that help us prepare for the judgement and Christ's second coming. The best promise for the future is John 3:16.

To pray, to read the Word and to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit are necessary to understand the message God the Father has for us. Therefore, brethren, let us heed the writings. Let us live up to the Light that we have lest this light turn back into darkness in our lives. Let us go to the Word daily to receive from it all the help God offers us.

Khege Mwata-Swana was born in the Kamayala station area of southern Bandundu province. He came to know the Lord through the ministry of Bertha and Mary Miller and their staff of Zairian pastors.

Trained as a teacher, he taught for several years on the station. He was then recommended by church leaders as a candidate for training in the Bible Institute at Kalonda station.

Upon graduating he again returned to Kamayala and served as an instructor of Bible in the Station schools. When missionary Ben Eidse became involved in a new translation of the Chokwe Bible, he requested that Khege be his consultant and fellow translator. He continues to serve with Ben in this capacity now.

He is engaged in a sacred labor.

My Experience In Translating The Bible Ghymalu Kianza

THERE IS A SAYING which goes: "Experience makes a man wise." Personally I have no problem believing that!

At the theological school where I studied, we learned a few basic concepts of Bible translation. Counting on this knowledge I believed myself to be well preparing for translation work and was really interested in it. But after working for a while in another vocation, I gave up the idea of attempting translation work.

When the Mennonite Church of Zaire invited me to join the translation team of which my brothers Rev. Jim Bertsche and Deacon Kipoko David were already members, I asked myself if I would still be able to recall the methodology of translation that we had studied given the fact that several years has passed since I finished school. Here let me say that I still had confidence in what I had learned in school concerning translation work. But, alas, my confidence in my understanding of Bible translation was shaken. I soon realized that what one imagines Bible translation to be is completely different from what one actually finds in the work. I came to understand that the translation of the Bible is a very difficult task which many have never experienced. In order to understand this, it is not sufficient to only hear about it, one must experience the reality of it.

THE TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE is both theoretically and practically different from the translation of secular works.

First I would like to talk about the translator himself. He must know and understand the Bible that he is responsible to translate. He must be possessed of a tranquil spirit and an exactitude for he translates a message of the first century into a receptor language of the twentieth. century. He must translate it meticulously in a manner that his fellowmen unders-



tand it as the people of the first century understood it. This is the major concern which preoccupy the translator of the Bible. He must furthermore know that he is engaged not in a secular, but in a sacred labor. He must be a man of God who knows the King of Kings. This is not necessarily a requirement for the translation of secular works.

Like my brothers, I at first thought a literal translation would be the best. But through experience I came to understand that there are many inconveniences in a literal translation. For example, in I Samuel 24:4 it is said that King Saul entered a cave in order to cover his feet. If we translate this passage literally into Giphende, it conveys a wrong sense for this would lead people to believe that King Saul had cold feet and entered the cave to warm them. This passage, however, had another meaning in the usage of language of that day.

Another example is the passage in Proverbs 25:22 which speaks of piling hot coals on the head of your enemy. To translate this passage

literally is to twist its sense and make it resemble a Giphende proverb which says, "You placed a red hot coal in the hand of your fellow man," which is to say, you have provoked or placed your fellow man in serious difficulty. This, however, is not the sense of this passage.

There are many problems which are confronted in the translation of the Bible. Some are understood by those who are not translators, but others are not. For instance, there is the problem of language. Some people see in the Bible a good document for the preservation of their language. This is a false concept. The translator seeks the closest possible equivalent with which to translate intelligently the Word of God while always remaining faithful to the message to be presented as it is found in the original text. Approached in this manner the translation can be neither altogether a dynamic translation nor a literal translation but it must be as nearly as possible an equivalent translation.

THERE IS A PROBLEM of public understanding of our work. There are some of my friends who studied with me in theological school who, like I, thought some time back that the task of translation is comparatively simple. At one point they suggested to Dr. Fehdereau, who was the translation consultant for Zaire, that responsibility for the translation of the Old Testament be divided among several of them so that work could move ahead quickly. Their idea was that most any existing version of the Old Testament could be used and translated into our language. If Dr. Fehdereau had accepted their proposal, a translation of the Bible into Giphende would undoubtedly have been finished in less than two years but it would have been a work done without method and frequently without accurate sense which would have been a useless loss of time.

There is also a financial problem. I would be very happy if our readers of the Bible understood that the Bible is a unique book which is given practically free of charge. If all of the expense involved in the work of translation were calculated such as travel expenses, material used and salaries of personnel involved, I am sure that the Bible could only be purchased by rich people. I therefore regret the fact that some people who receive the Bible at a subsidized rate still complain about the price! This I am not able to understand.

The translation of the Bible a work which surpasses my abilities. If I am involved in this work, it is only due to God who extends to me His grace. I love this work only because I want to make the Bible available to my fellow people but also because in the process I am able to gleen precious gems which are hidden there for my own personal benefit. For this privilege I am truly grateful.

Pastor Ghymalu Kianza is the son of a village chief from Secteur Mbelo about 75 kilometers north of Mukedi station in Bandundu Province of Zaire. He attended a bush school established by missionaries near his home village. As a school boy he heard the way of salvation through faith in Christ explained to him. In due time he accepted Christ as Savior and gave public witness of his faith in baptism. Eventually he pursued his education at Mukedi station.

After serving as a teacher in one of the church schools, he was chosen to follow a five year theological training course. Upon graduating he returned to Mukedi station where he served for two years as instructor of Bible and dean of students at Mukedi High School. It was at this point that he was invited to move to Nyanga Station to join the translation team which was at work finishing a revision of the Pende New Testament and beginning a translation of the Old Testament.

Pastor Ghymalu had served on this committee for 18 months when the missionary member returned to the States. Such was his grasp of translation principles and his commitment to the work that the United Bible Societies of Zaire asked him to assume leadership for the ongoing translation project.

Some months later, the district leaders of his home church area pled with him to return to Mukedi station to serve as their station pastor and district chairman. In spite of this added heavy responsibility, Pastor Ghymalu continues to organize his time so that he can continue his translation work. He has shown himself to be gifted and has demonstrated deep commitment to the project. The Zaire Mennonite Church is fortunate to have a man of this caliber and commitment for this significant work.

The Message - Not the Words

Translating the Bible Into African Languages

Dr. Donald S. Deer

A RECENT COUNT of the world's languages puts the total over 5,000 with only 261 languages having the entire Bible. There are over 1,000 languages in Africa but only 80 some languages have the entire Bible. Zaire alone has some 206 languages, but only 13 of these have the entire Bible translated. To that we could add four more languages that are spoken in Zaire and neighboring countries as well, and get a total of 17. Furthermore, the entire New Testament has been translated into another 14 languages. Portions and selections exist in another 31 languages. Mark and John are the favorite books; there are 15 versions of Mark and 12 of John.

But quoting statistics won't suffice. We need to analyze them. For many of these translations are nearly impossible to understand in spots. As a matter of fact, in all Africa only one version so far printed and on sale is listed among the 23 "dynamic equivalence" translations the Bible Societies recommend in the entire world. It so happens that that version is one produced in Zaire.

What does a translation need to be like to meet the Bible Societies' standards? What makes a translation both accurate and readable (since that is what they mean by "dynamic equivalence")? Following are the five tests.

1. The first is that the translation ought to be based on the original languages of the Bible, Hebrew and Greek. When a translator doesn't have access to a knowledge of the original languages he or she is at a loss to know which versions to follow, when the different versions don't say the same thing. For instance, in Acts 2:44-45 and Acts 4:34-35, the Revised Standard

Zaire is one of those countries where Christians are learning for the first time that God doesn't have to talk "funny" but that He can talk their language the way they talk it.

Version says that the early Christians "sold" their possessions and goods (or lands and houses). We are a bit surprised, however, to read that they sold their things off twice. What did they have left after the first sale? The problem is that it's not easy to express the idea of the tense of the Greek verb, even though it is easy to give the correct idea in the Zairian languages. The Good News Bible says they "would sell" their things, which is the only way we can get the idea across in English that they would sell off part of their things at a time. Most Zairian languages, however, have a tense that's tailormade for this problem, and that can directly translate the idea of repeated action inherent in the tense of the Greek used in these verses.

2. But it isn't enough to take the original languages for a starting point. We also have to know what text of the original to follow in making our translations. In the case of the New Testament, the answer is relatively easy, since Protestants and Catholics have agreed on using the Greek New Testament published by the Bible Societies as their base.

In one case, Luke 9:35 in the Kikongo Bible, which is the oldest complete Bible in Zaire dating from 1905, the difference in the original corresponds to a difference in spelling which involved only one letter! This Bible reads: "my Son, whom I love..." (mwan'ami wazolwa). Whereas a new version in this language based on the Bible Society Greek New Testament would have to read, "my Son whom I

have chosen" (mwan'ami wasolwa)!

3. We shouldn't imagine, whoever that it's enough to base our versions on the original languages and to use the best edition of the text in those languages. We also have to know how to understand those languages. Our third principle, then is that we have to make use of the most up-to-date understanding of those languages.

Turning to the New Testament, we can cite I Corinthians 12:29-30 as a case where a better understanding of the Greek keeps us from leaving a series of questions Paul asks without an answer. For in the Greek, a negative answer is implied. So the question and the answer are translated at the same time, in a simple negative statement.

4. But we must move on now to the fourth principle. Once we've decided to base our translation on the original languages, in the best text available, using the latest understanding of those languages, we still have the problem of finding the best way to get the message from the original languages into the receptor languages. You will notice I said the message - not the words. The King James Version translators understand what was involved when they asked, "Is the Kingdom of God become words or syllables? Why should we be in bondage to them if we may be free?" The way the Bible Societies ask us to translate is by what they call "dynamic equivalence" which they define as what happens when today's readers react the same way or nearly

the same way to the text in the translation as the original readers did to the original. Now obviously that takes some doing.

Earlier version in Zaire didn't pay much attention to this principle in their translation of Luke 1:26-27 with unexpected results. You may remember that in this passage the angel Gabriel is sent by God to Elizabeth in the "sixth month". Here in Zaire the months are usually referred to by number, rather than by name, so in the older translations, which translated words rather than the sense, the message that came across was that God sent Gabriel to Elizabeth in the month of June! The way this was avoided in the new Kituba translation, published in 1973 was by saying, "When Elizabeth had had a tummy (been pregnant) for six months . . . " This is also the solution of the new Lingala translation, now being printed for those who speak the dialect of this language which is spoken mainly in the country's capital, Kinshasa.

We are so familiar with the parables in Luke 15 that we many not realize how many traps there are there for translators to fall into. Fortunately, one Zairian translator was not napping when one turned up in Luke 15:4. I should explain at this point that only when the native speaks of the language have full control of the phrasing of the translation can the success of the project be insured. A foreigner wouldn't have noticed any problem here. After all, what problem

Dynamic Equivalence...is what happens when today's readers react the same way to the text in the translation as the original readers did to the original.

is there in translating, "If one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them . . . ?" The Zairian I mentioned, nevertheless, was insistent that it was impossible to render this construction literally into his language, for the simple reason that in his language people can't lose sheep. "They can lose coins," he said, "because they're responsible for the coin's loss, but they can't lose sheep: a sheep has to get lost itself."

Hence it is that in the language the translation reads: "If a certain person among you has a hundred sheep and

one of them gets lost . . . "

Translation work is rarely hilarious, but you can't imagine the gales of laughter that arose when some young Zairian translators discovered the rendering of Acts 10:13 in the previous version of Kituba. First a reminder about the context. The apostle Peter is having a vision and a voice says to him, "Get up Peter; kill and eat!" The catch here is that in Kituba there is only one verb to express both "to kill" and "to die". The only way of distinguishing between the two senses is to add an object to the verb in which case it becomes "to kill" or refrain from using an object and it means "to die". Perhaps you've already guessed what set these young translators laughing in the previous version. The earlier version didn't provide any object for the simple reason that there isn't any in most versions in English, German or French. And the reason these versions don't have any is that there isn't any in the original Greek, either. Thus, the earlier version reads: "Get up Peter, drop dead and eat." A mighty good trick even for the Prince of the Apostles! I'm sure you'll agree with me that supplying an object here is necessary in Kituba which is why the new version reads: "Peter, get up, kill any living thing and eat it."

5. Use the original language as a base and make sure that you have the best edition of the text in those languages, that you are up on the best and latest understanding of those languages and that you know how best to move the message from one language to the other. Those are the four basic translation principles we've seen so far. There's only one left, but it is the one that everyone should be able to understand easiest. The style of the translation in the receptor language must be right. Now we all know that the language used in church in Canada and the United States is not always exactly the most natural form of the language. But in Africa, there is a special kind of problem that arises from the presence of foreigners, usually missionaries, speaking the Africans' languages. Much too often the Africans, instead of correcting the foreigner's grammar, end up imitating it. Most of them are bilingual, of course; once they stop talking to the foreigner, they can revert to the natural idiom of their language. But one pastor I know can only talk the "missionary dialect" much to the annovance of his fellow Zairians! The result of this situation is that most of

the translations of the Bible in Zaire are so unnatural that the better-educated Zairians use the French Bible as a "pony" to figure out what the translators of the Bible in their languages were trying to say!

You may find it hard to believe that such a lamentable situation can exist. I know I did some 22 years ago, when warned of it in a course of Linguistics. But the fact is, that when I examined the situation for myself, I found it was, if anything, worse than I had been told.

But something can be and has been and is being done about it. God's Good News is too important for it not to be translated both accurately and intelligently. The Bible Societies have shown us what to do and are making it possible to do it in many parts of the world, including Africa. Zaire is one of those countries where Christians are learning for the first time that God doesn't have to talk "funny" but that He can talk their language the way they can talk it. The only difference now is that new ideas are now getting through in a way they didn't use to.

Translation is anything but easy; there's only one reason why we take so much trouble to bother so much about it and that is that God has done something important. He has revealed Himself. Pray for all those who are trying to answer the challenge of proclaiming the Good News as revealed in His Son, our Savior in such a way that there will be no misunderstanding, no matter what the tongue.

Agnes Sprunger was born on September 25, 1885. When she was 13 months old, her mother died. Her father returned to Berne, Indiana where his six children were placed in various homes of the community. In the meantime the father sought to reestablish a home so as to reunite his entire family. Mrs. Sam Liechty, a widow of four years and mother of seven, because of gratitude to God for helping her keep her own family together, decided to give this little girl a home.

About six months later when Agnes' father was ready to reunite the family Mrs. Liechty was not willing to give up this new member of her family. Although she was never adopted, she grew up in this home as a foster child, and was very definitely a real member of the family. A young man who lived with the family a few years to help with the farm work later recalled: "Every morning they had devotions to start the day." Speaking about Agnes who was about his same age, he said: "She was the mildest person I have ever met. She would never hurt anyone and was always a very devoted Christian.'

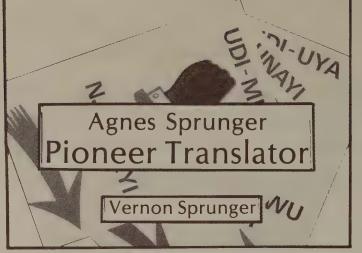
With her foster mother, Agnes attended the Missionary Church. At the age of 23, Agnes was accepted by the Missionary Church Association for overseas service in Africa. However, this never materialized.

Agnes' formal training was rather limited. She had completed Elementary School and graduated from Fort Wayne Bible Institute. She also spent nine years working as a practical nurse in Cincin-

nati, Ohio.

During the time of waiting to go to the mission field, the Congo Inland Mission was organized. In 1916 Agnes went out under the Congo Inland Mission to the Belgian Congo. She travelled with Rev. and Mrs. L. B. Haigh and Rev. and Mrs. John P. Barkman. It took them from March 11 to May 19, 1916 to arrive at Charlesville Station.

The first term of service of three years was divided between Charlesville and



Kalamba in the Tshiluba speaking area of the mission. Her work consisted mostly of helping with school work and women's work. She almost always had charge of the dispensary work at each of the stations. In 1919 she returned to the States for her first furlough. It took her three months and a day to make that trip. There were layovers at Dima in Congo and again in London. The furlough lasted from October 22, 1919 until February 8, 1922. After one year at Charlesville, nine new missionaries arrived and a new station was opened. This was Nyanga station among the Baphende people. Now a new language had to be learned since these people spoke Giphende. A Muluba teacher who had been instructed at Charlesville, had now been teaching in a Baphende village for four years. He came to Nyanga station on Monday noons and stayed until Wednesday evenings then would return to his assigned village. While he was at Nyanga he and Agnes would sit and translate, working for a while on a dictionary then on a translation of the Gospel of Matthew. They also translated some songs. Agnes also helped new missionaries at Nyanga to learn the Giphende language and wrote some lessons for them to use.

After one year at Nyanga, she was sent to Mukedi to open another new station with Mr. and Mrs. Henry Moser, Mr. Lester Bixel and Miss Erma Birky. After being there for only three weeks, lightening struck the thatchand-stick hut in which they lived, destroying it and much of the Giphende translation work that had been done in Nyanga. The Giphende at the

two stations of Nyanga and Mukedi varies somewhat, but since the Baphende population in the Mukedi district is considerably larger than that of the Nyanga district, it was decided to use the Mukedi version Giphende.

Agnes had studied neither Greek nor Hebrew but used six versions of the Bible for her translation work. She used one German, two French, two English and one Tshiluba version. Her African helper knew the Tshiluba

language.

She said that she did not know why the Lord had thrust her into the work of translating the scriptures for she felt little qualified for the responsibility. Her translation work however, was very carefully and conscientiously done and was used in the schools of the mission as readers. The Bible schools also used the translations. All the work she had done during the second term was mimeographed on the field. When she returned for her second furlough, the book of Luke was ready and prepared for printing. The British and Foreign Bible Society printed

In 1927, Agnes returned to the field for her third term of service. The first three years of this term were spent in teaching school, doing dispensary work, some itinerating also some translating. The last three years of this term were spent almost entirely in translating work. Her entire third furlough was spent in revising, rewriting and proofreading the final copy of the New Testament in Giphende. It was printed in 1935 by the British and Foreign Bible Society. Several further editions were printed as more and more copies were needed. Agnes was very determined that her translation work should say to the Baphende what God had to say to them.

Once she had trouble in finding the exact word for "love" that she felt would convey the right connotation. The Pende people have one word that can mean love, belief, faith but she was not satisfied with that word. One day she asked her helper and others: "What does a mother feel for her child?" She got the word she wanted and then rewrote all the Gospels using that better word for love. A Catholic priest let it be known that he thought very highly of her translation work. Agnes spoke very deliberately, slowly and correctly. If while praying in public in Giphende, and she made a grammatical error, she would return in her prayer and say it

By the time she reached retirement age in 1953, she had completed a translation of the Old Testament as well and left it in unpublished, typed manuscript form in Zaire. Upon the recommendation of the American Bible Society a revision of the existing Pende New Testament and the Old Testament manuscript was begun by Rev. James Bertsche in 1957. Particular effort was made to employ idiomatic forms as used in the everyday language of the people. In this effort he worked with Zairian collaborators, notably Mr. Kipoko David and Pastor Ghymalu Kianza. It is now the latter who carries on the translation work since Rev. Bertsche's return to the States.

The Lord Willing, the Baphende people will one day have the entire Bible in their hands. That day, when it comes, will be the end result of the collaboration of missionaries and Zairians across a span of more than fifty years. The early faith, dedication and tireless labors of Agnes Sprunger was the beginning of it all.

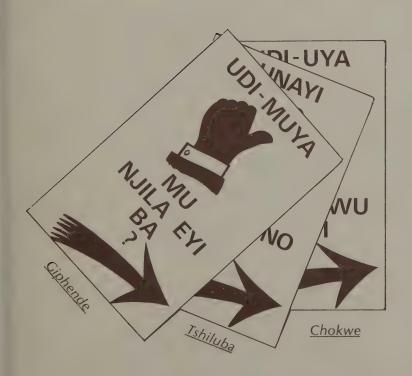
Agnes Sprunger passed on to meet her Lord on January 11, 1973 while residing at Swiss Villa, Berne, Indiana.

Get To Know These Names!

These People Speak This Language

Giphende Baphende ChokwE Bachokwe Tshiluba Baluba Lulua Kishilele Bashilele Kisonde Basonde Kilunda Balunda Government and military personnel Lingala Kituba Trade language | W. Zaire

Gospel Tracts in three Zairian languages





EDITORIAL



WALK INTO ANY Christian bookstore and the choice is nearly endless: Gospel portions in tracts, pamphlets, booklets; New Testaments in various dimensions, bindings and formats; Bibles in pocket size, desk size and pulpit size; Bibles bound in hard covers, plastic covers and leather covers; Bibles intended for the casual reader, the seminarian and the bride; Bibles with copious study notes, center page cross-references, exhaustive indexes and concordances; Bibles with historical data, maps and minidictionaries; God's Word scattered all across a price range within reach of all of us.

AND THEN, there are the various versions: The King James Version, revered and still read by many, the text from which generations of English-speaking Christians have gathered verses of instruction, promise and hope; the American Standard Version; the Revised Standard Version; the Amplified Bible: the New English Bible: the Jerusalem Bible; the Good News for Modern Man; the Living Bible; all are part of the endless list. Furthermore, the end is not yet. We already have the New International Version of the New testament with promise of the Old Testament to follow in due time.

BIBLES, BIBLES, everywhere: myriads in English, all readily available to us. How easy it is to take them all for granted. How easy it is to forget the investments of time, scholarship, material resource, courage, vision and in some cases, life's blood that were made through the past centuries. How easy it is to accept it all without a second thought as though somehow it always has been that way, as though somehow it is perfectly natural, as though this is the situation everywhere.

But it isn't. Far from it! There are still many people who do not even have a scrap of scripture in their own language. There are still many more who have to be content with a Gospel or two, while they long for a complete New Testament or dream the ultimate dream that of having a complete Bible in their mother tongue. Such is the situation in many parts of Africa and specifically in the Republic of Zaire. Here it is that some of the forgotten or ignored history lying behind our own many English versions is today being rewritten by missionaries and African leaders. In our generation, there are again those possessed of a vision and deep desire to make God's Word available in African tongues. Thus, they set themselves to the exacting, time consuming and often wearisome task of searching for equivalent terms and idioms which will permit Divine Truth to become alive and redemptive in the comprehension, life and experience of those who have yet to read and understand the book for the first time.

THE AIMM DERIVES what it feels to be an excusable measure of satisfaction from the fact that two significant translation projects in two Zairian tribal tongues are currently being carried on by missionary Zairian teams within the Zaire Church program. The next time you pause before your desk or book shelf and debate which of your half dozen or more English versions of the Bible you want to take along to church or your Bible study group, remember that there are many who are not troubled by such a decision simply because they do not have even one translation in their own language. And as you tuck the version of your choice under your arm, breath a word of prayer for those who are now laboring to make God's Word available in at least two additional African tongues.

lames Bertsche

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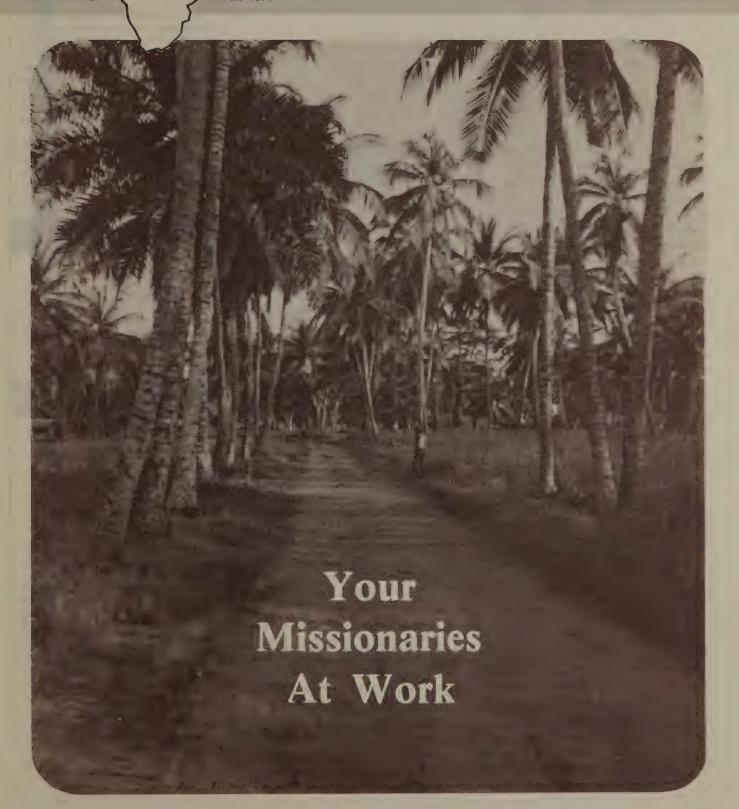
God's Word in African Tongues

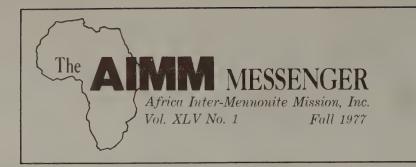
MESSENGER 1

Vol. XLV No. 1

Fall 1977

Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, Inc.





In This Issue . . .

... some of the "mysterious secrets" of a missionary's life are brought out. The biggest secret can be found in the editorial on page 16. Just to give you a hint - James Bertsche tells us that basically a missionary is a human being like you and me. I wonder if you ever thought of that before?

Stan Nussbaum, missionary in Lesotho shares not only a bit of Sesotho language on page 3, but lets us in on one of his "days". In just one sentence I had a glimpse of his wife's day when he mentions that their baby had the measles! I can well imagine that day since my own baby is Adam's age . . . and I doubt that missionary babies are any different from "other" babies!

PETER BULLER takes us with him on his motorcycle while he visits a Kinshasa Mennonite Church in the suburbs. Page 5 is his delightful account of a Sunday morning in Zaire.

LOREN and DONNA ENTZ are a newly-married couple preparing to pioneer a work in Upper Volta among the Senufo people. They spent a heavy year at Seminary to begin preparation for this assignment. Right now they are in France for language study. Donna shares on page 7. I think I should point out that the missionaries in preparation work very hard and conscientiously in order

to go to their task ready to meet ANY challenge. Pray for them.

Some of you may have wondered what HARRY and LOIS DYCK have been doing in Francistown, Botswana. Here's your chance to find out on page 8 and 9. It is obvious that Harry likes what he does and does it well.

NORMAN DERSTINE introduces us to a Botswana "institution" — T.T.T. He has found that things take time and that waiting has its own reward. Page 11 is T.T.T.

Thank you LORIN ENSZ for the photo on the front cover. Lorin and Sandee are just home from Zaire after serving as hostelparents for two years.

You'll be interested in several news items within the AIMM family beginning on page 13. One item that we didn't have room for is the announcement of the forthcoming AIMM semi-annual Board Meeting to be held at Berne, Indiana October 9 and 10. The friends of AIMM are cordially invited to attend a special missionary service at 7:00 p.m. at the First Mennonite Church of Berne, Indiana on October 9. Board meeting sessions are also open to the constituency on Monday, October 10, beginning at 8:30 a.m. We hope to see you there.

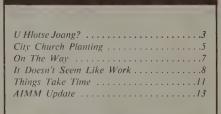
-Sue Barkman

Editor James Bertsche Assistant Editor Sue Barkman

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U Hlotse Joang?

Stan Nussbaum



"U HLOTSE JOANG?" is a delightfully ambiguous Sesotho question "Hlotse" has two meanings depending on whether the "o" is pronounced with a high or low tone. My American ears have not yet learned to tell the difference, so I am never quite sure as I hear this greeting if I am being asked "How well did your day go?" or "How well did you conquer?"

Perhaps you suppose that for a missionary, the two questions are really one since missionaries are supposed to "conquer" everyday. This missionary would certainly not claim that he feels like a spiritual "Napoleon" every evening but let me tell you about one day when the battle came out at least even . . .

I was invited to the ordination service of one of the first independent church pastors to graduate from the Bible Institute of the Lesotho Evangelical Church, I picked up the lady who is team-teaching with me in Bible courses and the older sister of the King of Lesotho as well as three unexpected riders who had somehow found out about the time and place of our depart-

The hour's drive to Tabola went by quickly and beautifully; 45 minutes for the first 35 miles and 15 minutes for the last two. The pleasure was marred only by the sight of a light-blue Toyota pick-up which had smashed into two cows near Teyateyaneng.

The service started about 9:10 with a hymn and the Lord's Prayer. Then we three "special guests" from Maseru were treated to a hot breakfast while the men went into a tent and the women into a house to put on the robes which distinguish members of the Nazarite association — an interdenominational group. When the men had donned their khakis and the women their long white robes, the procession to the church grounds began, everyone marching in time with the hymn being sung. The service was held outdoors since the building was too small to accommodate the ordination day crowd, which eventually swelled to about 300.

LESOTHO

The Nazarites finished their part of the ordination blessing, including a rather vigorous laying on-of-hands and marching around Rev. Monanyana, the pastor being ordained.

The service was quite an affair. Gifts were presented by persons representing the local Methodist, LEC, Catholic, and independent churches. The two LEC men gave a kerosene lamp which seemed a particularly appropriate gift for one who is a light in his community, but the gift which brought tears to the eyes of the receiver was a blanket which two representatives of the women's society wrapped around his shoulders.

Each donor began by singing a hymn of his choice, with the congregation joining in after the first line. There was also a cash collection for Pastor Monanyana, which was taken in the typical style givers bring their offerings to the table or altar in front of the presiding minister while a hymn is sung.

The hymn singing deserves an article of its own. It is mostly done from memory since hymnals are few. Many hymns are arranged so that a "caller" announces the words to the coming line while the congregation is holding out the last syllable of the previous line. One always stands for hymns which usually is a welcome change since the services are rather long. Hymns are started by anyone at almost any time. If the time is inappropriate, the minister in charge at the moment will quickly raise his hand, which is also the signal to conclude a hymn. This can be rather amusing as it was when a full-throated minstrel standing just behind my ear let out a gusty "Booooo-" only to be silenced after that single syllable. At the next appropriate opportunity, the minister turned to this would-be singer and allowed him to begin his hymn.

Hymns are also used themselves as means of control of the service, which meanders rather than marches to its conclusion. (Spontaneity is more important than structure.) Anyone who wants to speak may address the group with a testimony or exhortation and on this day many people wanted to. However, as happened in one case, if the volunteer speaker strays too far from the point, someone in the congregation starts singing and the presiding minister joins in the song instead of raising his hand and the offending speaker is musically laid to rest.

More often, the speakers are on target. For example, the king's sister was, in her impassioned address; the minister in his reading of scripture about Joash, and the poet in his recitation about the history of the independent church known as the Moshoeshoe Berean Bible Readers Church or more commonly as Kereke ea Moshoeshoe.

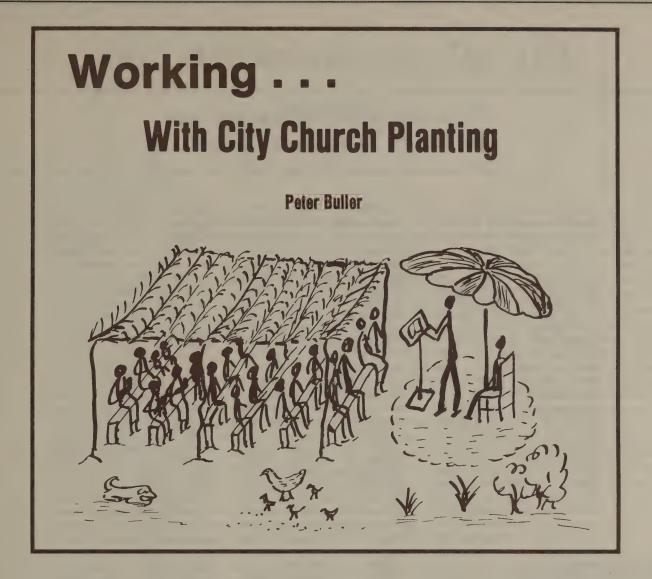
Since the whole service was in Sesotho, I was catching only a smattering of the proceedings, but I did recognize one other historical part of the service — the 39-verse ballad (with refrain!) about Walter Mattita, the evangelist who founded the Church of Moshoeshoe over 50 years ago. Only about five verses were sung on this occasion. My few remarks to the group about four sentences in Sesotho and four minutes in English came toward the end of the service not too long before the ordination

Speaking of the end of the service, it came about 4:30 when the moderator announced that due to the imminent setting of the sun, the last fourth of the printed service would have to be omitted, so that we could have our lunchsupper and everyone be on their way by dark. Most of the people walked; the parking lot had six cars, three horses and a tractor.

We started back toward Maseru about 5:00 just in time to see one of the dazzling Lesotho sunsets. After dropping off my riders, I headed for home. "How was your day?" asked Lorri. "Your nose looks sun-burned.'

As it turned out, Lorri herself had had quite a day with our bemeasled baby Adam. We got the kids to bed and Lorri soon followed their example.

I still had a little mental energy left, so I thought I would read a book about pastoral leadership. I came to a halt on page 39 discouraged with the superficiality. I skipped to the conclusion to see if it was any better. No luck. I tried one other chapter that had an interesting heading. Not much there either. Hardly an exciting ending to a very enjoyable day, but then, there will be another day to conquer in the morning.



COME VISIT A Mennonite Church here in the city of Kinshasa this Sunday morning. We have six worship centers scattered throughout the city. This isn't because Mennonites are split up into rival groups. It's simply a fact that in a city of almost two million people with only a rudimentary public transportation system, the church has to be where the people live. The pastor of one of the churches is attending our school this year, so he has moved for the year from his church to the campus. To go by city bus to the service which starts at 10:00 a.m., he leaves the house by 7:00 a.m.

With a salary of \$60 a month he is far from purchasing a car in a country where the smallest Volkswagen costs about \$7,000. Thus in Kinshasa, the church can be found in unlikely places. But that is a part of what makes Christianity exciting.

This morning I leave Gladys on campus where she supervises her student Sunday School teachers and drive to our newest center. I go by motorcycle, not by car since the church is in a newly developing suburb where cars with their four wheels cannot navigate. The suburb sprawls along the flank of a hill that slopes toward a river - an area roughly three-quarter mile by one mile. Since the river is the suburbs' water supply, he who buys a lot at the bottom of the hill has a real advantage when he mixes cement blocks to build his house. But at the same time he will have to carry the cement sacks down the hill. Sand is no problem. The hill is sand. Three years ago this hillside was bare except for scrub trees and bushes. Today some three thousand people live there, many of them in packing-board huts with grass roofs. Each month the owner may hope to save enough of his salary to buy another \$7 sack of cement -

"The church in Kinshasa can be found in unlikely places."

enough to make another 25 blocks toward his goal of building a permanent house with a corrugated aluminum roof.

With the Yamaha in low gear I pick my way carefully down the hillside to the home of the brother where church services are held. At one point I call on villagers to help me negotiate the cycle over a two-foot shelf that runs between a four foot washout and a bamboo fence marking a lot boundry. Were I 18 years old I might roar over it, but I'm aware that at 52 I've no mind to run competition with Evel Knievel. After asking for permission to drive through several garden areas for which one gentleman kindly unfastens his fence, I arrive at the home where people are gathering in a carefully swept yard.

The pastor, a student from our school, is conferring with laymen about the order of service. He arrived there after an hours walk from the end of the city bus line. The church "building" consists of dried palm fronds supported by a lattice of bamboo poles. The "ceiling" is about five feet high, which is a bit embarassing when we rise for hymns and prayer because I find my head protruding through the roof. This gives me a fine view of the surrounding country, but separates me from the congregation. Forked sticks support four inch-wide planks to form the benches. A large canvas beach umbrella is set up in the pulpit area and provides adequate shade plus an aura of importance to the preacher.

The service is simple in the Mennonite tradition. About 50 people are present. Special music consists of a gospel solo by one of the ladies and several numbers with African rhythm by a six man choir. In the African fashion the director does not impolitely turn his back to the audience, but half-way faces the congretation and acts out the drama of the story of Jonah by facial and bodily action. Applause. The offering amounts to almost five dollars. The student pastor gives a simple exposition of the parable of the sower, calling upon his people to themselves sow the good seed of the Word and also respond to it in the week ahead.

After the service the church committee meets with me briefly to discuss their need for purchasing a lot for a permanent church building. If the local chief is favorable, such a lot might be had for about \$250. Friendly farewells. I guide the motorbike back up the long hillside, more surely now as I follow my old tracks.

At the top I stop for a moment to adjust my helmet strap and view the sprawling suburban hillside. It is good that amidst that teeming humanity there lives a group of people who love Christ and want to share Him with their neighbors; it makes being a missionary in church leadership training worthwhile. Fifteen minutes later I'm home for Sunday dinner of hamburger and rice with Gladys and Charles. It has been a good morning. Wish you all could have shared it with us.

"... the church has to be where the people live."

Your Missionaries On The Way

Donna Entz

IT WAS A YEAR of hard work. Not physically, but mentally, spiritually and emotionally. After class, the brain was often exhausted from sorting and being challenged. With no experience in overseas mission work, it was a year of orientation into a new way of life.

We came to seminary as newlyweds realizing that our marriage needed to be nurtured. We wanted to find God's leading together and learn to function as a team. We struggled but our marriage found healthy growing conditions through the many friends and the classes that stimulated our spirits.

The Bible became a book so rich in experience that it seems endless. I feel we received tools in which to dig deeper. It was so fascinating to spend a whole day simply probing new ideas out of the scriptures. Especially the Old Testament opened up for me. I could see how God did not simply exist, but that He was active. It told me the story of how God called a people out of their own culture to become His children. In some ways these special people looked like their neighbours. In other ways God called them to be very different. Many Old Testament practices are encountered in primitive tribes today so people come face to face with Jesus. Sacrifices and polygamy are present realities in some African tribes, so identification with the Old Testament comes easily. Myths often tell of the people's understanding of God.

We came to seminary with a general commitment to missions, but no specific leading. In October of last year, we heard of the possibilities of a new mission venture among the Senufo people of Upper Volta. The AIMM Board was struggling with this challenge since it had not undertaken a pioneering project for some time. We knew the decision was not for us to make, so we simply asked AIMM to place us where we could best be used and believed God would lead through them. But we could not shake the Upper Volta challenge. Several other people, as well, felt that we were suited for such an assignment. In January, when AIMM asked us to accept this West African assignment, we were not surprised. Since that time, we have done more background study and the task looks even tougher. It seems the Senufo have been little affected by the outside world. They retain their traditional African religion and way of life and there is very little Christian presence among them. This assignment made our second semester of study most fascinating as there was a tangible project for us to work on. This pioneer venture gives us the responsibility to learn from the past in order to go with the right attitudes. Some of the strongest support came from our fellow students, one of which was Ilunga Mukanza, A Zairian pastor who helped us to see the African perspective.

There were many difficult

problems raised in response to the low key approach we proposed in our class reports. But students did not question whether we should go or not. The sense of mission, of being called to work in the world, was very strong in the seminary community.

So how has seminary contributed to the developing of our approach to missions in the 70's? I found a new excitement about evangelism. about sharing my life and my faith openly with others. This is not dependent on new strategies and techniques, but on the building of personal relationships across cultural barriers. Our relationships as a team of missionaries are therefore vital to our work. I believe people will be attracted to Christ if they can see that we as outsiders really love each other and thus exemplify the church. We as individualistic North Americans will find this difficult but I feel it's worth the effort.

IN THE 70's, a new sensitivity and respect for other cultures is demanded. We need to be able to accept a person's customs, as well as the individual and affirm the many things that are positive. We need to spend much time learning the language and listening to the myths and stories that are the basis of their life. We must have an understanding of their world view before we can begin to understand how Jesus can meet their needs. Missionaries have learned in recent years

that one cannot separate spiritual needs from physical. As regards the Senufo, their integrated life patterns demand that we deal with their obvious and most hurtful needs first, understanding that their agricultural and healing activities are all religious acts. No matter what area one begins to work in, the central core of their religious beliefs will be touched by the change. Jesus stressed the need to meet people's total needs and did not separate them as we have tended to do.

A study of the African Independent Churches has given us a vision of what an African church member looks like. They have emerged

continued on p. 10



Loren and Donna Entz are in France studying French. They plan to go to Upper Volta sometime next year. Their address is Accueil Fraternel, 43400 Le Chambon sur Lignon, France.

BOTSWANA

"It Doesn' Work

Har

I WONDER HOW MANY people would really call the things they see me do "work". They don't see me plodding off to a job at 7:30 a.m.; they don't see me return from any particular place at 5:30; they don't see me sweat at any shop nor sit in an office in a downtown business place. They may see me chatting with a vendor in the marketplace, or notice that I am involved in some "church discussion" with Tommy or Freedman or Monyatsi. They may see me exerting some muscle in our garden but that is hardly what most people call "work" What is it then that this expatriate is doing here in Francistown?

I guess it is all a matter of definition. Instead of the usual "eight to five" hours at a job downtown, I spend those hours in the study reading, writing and wringing out lessons in preparation for the Bible classes with the so-called "Spiritual Churches" of Southern

Africa.

Perhaps a word about the origin and intent of these churches is in order. In brief, these churches sprang up all over Southern Africa largely due to the fact that in the eyes of the churchgoers, the traditional mission churches did not meet the needs or expectations of these African people. Once the impact of the Gospel hit them, these members became convinced that the occasion demanded celebration in addition to sanctification. The Gospel warranted participation not domestication. The presence of the Holy Spirit allowed for real dynamics and spontaniety which they felt was lacking in the staid, predictable, almost debilitating "law churches" as they are often called. The more dynamic members of the mission churches found little reason to remain in the mission churches and little reason not to found their own congregations. Hundreds of these

types of churches now exist in Southern Africa and it is with these that I am occupied.

WHAT DOES THIS WORK INVOLVE? Up to this point it has been primarily a matter of preparing and teaching Bible classes. There is practically nothing available in the vernacular and the material available in English is generally too foreign to be readily used. I need to make extensive preparations before I feel "ready" for a class.

What have we done in the Bible studies thus far? We have completed a 15 lesson study of the Gospel of Mark and are now involved in two other courses running co-jointly for separate classes. One of these is a study of the Church and the other is a study of First Peter. The study of Mark was a good introductory endeavor as it helped us to get acquainted with each other and gave us some awareness of each other's expectations and capabilities. Naturally it was slow work with my limited facility with the Setswana language. But with the cooperation of my new-found teaching assistants we were able to prepare for the classes on Tuesday nights and "platoon" our way through the Thursday sessions.

As we made plans we felt obliged to make some requirements for the course so that the certificate issued would have some significance. One particular student failed to meet the requirements according to our records but was convinced in his own mind that he warranted a certificate. When he failed to wring that certificate from me, he accepted my suggestion to present his claims to the class. The students listened attentively but then concluded that the records of the teachers were reliable and must be accepted; therefore the certificate was not to be issued. To be sure I appreciated such affir-



Harry Dyck in class session of I in Francistown Botswana. Along the floor is Freedman Reuben, I the floor is Freedman Reuben.

Seem Like



endent Spiritual Church leaders Dyck is Otsile Ditsheko and on eaching assistants.

mation and trust but one cannot easily brush off the fact that this particular student has not enrolled in any of the subsequent

What did we undertake after the study of Mark? After some reflection of what was available to us, my assistants expressed interest in the study of "The Church: Jesus and His People" which is a correspondence course from Mennonite Broadcasts. This material was hardly designed with the African church leader in mind but it still proved very useful in its general content. Not only did it assist in identifying the Church on a continuum with the chosen people of the Old Testament, but it also gave justification for making it distinct from them. In such a study Jesus' own relation to Judaism and to the Church became more clear as did our role in the drama of the ongoing church.

The third course has been one of our own design. We have occupied ourselves almost exclusively with First Peter and his emphasis on Jesus' suffering for His people, and the response that He expects as a result. Because of the context of persecution, our students in Botswana can envision what their own submission to Jesus may mean in the future.

Since this course is essentially for Setswana-speaking people, I have been very dependent on my assistants, Freedman Reuben and Otsilo Ditsheko. While Freedman has endeared himself to many as that amiable man of preliminaries, Otsilo has become more and more the Setswana class teacher. With their cooperation and gifts I have been able to stay in the background and surface primarily for any questions.

The open forum is often the most meaningful part of the class period and it is in such discussions that one discovers himself most vulnerable. Many of the questions

are not readily answered. Among the questions are: What is our role in the government of a developing country? Should a Christian accept election or appointment to offices where he can be an influence for good? Who is to take care of the deceased brother's widow if not the brother? Who will be able to decide satisfactorily the return of the dowry if the widow is sent back to her parental home? Does Paul not teach that a family should provide for its own and avoid making its members a burden on the church? Or in the discussion of baptism. Why do your Western churches not baptize in the river like John and Jesus did? Is baptism public when it is done in the building where few can see and no outsiders realize what is happening? And if Naaman was purified after seven dippings in the river - should we not do likewise? Many of these subsequent discussions show that there is much cultural baggage on the part of both parties. But when one is prepared to acknowledge "I don't know help me find the answer," one manages to keep the door open for continued study and no one need to feel slighted or threatened.

But is it just a matter of classes in Francistown? No, not quite. As other branch churches discover what is happening they become more interested and trusting and ready to participate in classes in their own villages. One would like to focus on a class with the ministers but there is real value for me just to be present in the congregational activities as well.

I went to Maun, into the Kalahari Desert again this year for the annual meeting of one of many churches in that communitv. I took my car with four passengers and the Bishop of the Homelands Church of Botswana took his truck with 40 passengers. We left at 3:30 p.m. and arrived at

"It Doesn't Seem Like Work at All" from page 9

2:00 a.m. At our destination the little group of church members were waiting (at that hour!) and promptly ushered us into their reed and thatch structure to the accompaniment of singing, clapping and the boom of drums. Two hours later we were dismissed to sleep wherever we wished; I wished to sleep in the back of my car where I was free from the dread of reptiles while the rest of the celebrants slept under the trees. At sunup a dear lady brought me a basin of water and I could get cleaned up from the previous day's dusty travel. Much later, after many greetings, casual conversations, a few cups of tea and six feet of sugarcane we had another service of praise and prayer. From then until dark all was restful and quiet whereupon another all-night service began. I stuck with it until 3:00 a.m. when I felt the need for some sleep and so with the last amen of my sermon, excused myself and crawled into the back seat of my Peugeot again. The schedule for the following day was essentially the same. Whatever it was, I participated with my hosts in eating, worshipping or just visiting. At the

business meeting they expressed their appreciation for my presence, and thrust no less than ten pula into my hand in compensation for my travel expenses.

The question may arise, "How do you manage on such drawn out travels and schedules?" It is simply a matter of "when in Rome do as the Romans do!" These folk can rumble along in the back of a Bedford (British truck) for a day and night and never get emotionally ruffled. It behooves the expatriate to try to practice the same control. As it happened, the bishop and his entourage had a breakdown with their Bedford on the return from Maun and consequently arrived in Francistown two days later. But did that group get up-tight? Of course not; it was simply a good opportunity to visit with others and perhaps sing a bit more without having to compete with the roar of the Bedford! What seems to the foreigner an endurance test may to the Botswana be simply another delightful occasion to travel with local friends to socialize with more distant ones,

ten pula - \$11.60

to celebrate the faith with other worshippers.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE of such contacts or ministries? Perhaps this can best be answered by some of the affirmations that one receives from time to time. While waiting in a queue a blockand-a-half long at the bank one day, a student said, "We have been reading the Bible but we have been reading without understanding. When you explain a passage and give us some background, we can understand and we will be able to help our churches." On the way home from a class session a friend who had attended only as an observer stated, "You are doing right my brother by teaching without condemning; your students will be glad to learn because they are not threatened."

If teaching is to produce understanding to the end that the learner begins to teach others, and if that happens without creating fear in the student then it may be that some work of significance is being done. Such is my prayer.

But really — it doesn't seem like work at all.■

I could see how God did not simply exist but that He was active!

Your Missionaries On the Way

from page 7

without direct missionary involvement though some leaders may once have had such contacts. They have given up much of the Western customs and theology and have instead introduced African forms of worship such as singing and dancing. Some have allowed polygamy and ancestor worship which are traditional African practices. These churches have grown rapidly which tells us that they are meeting some deep needs of the African. I believe that in our mission approach as well, we need to be open to allow the church to take on forms that have meaning for them.

IN AFRICA, I believe missionaries have to be clearly Spirit-directed. Africans have a strong sense of belief in the supernatural. Missionaries, to be effective, have to experience

the power of the Holy Spirit. It is impossible for us to predict how those in another culture will be led in the faith once they have become children of God. We must simply see ourselves as servants, willing to be used by God and at the same time be open to learn from Christians in another culture.

We siezed the opportunity to go to seminary when it was offered to us. We may be idealistic and naive, but I pray we're also the kind of people who can admit mistakes and failures. God has been good to us and we have reason to say "thanks".

Things Take Time



Norman Derstine

WORDS CONVEY MEANING. And so do abbreviations such as *TTT*, *RB*, *BCC*, *IC*, *AIMM*, *SA*. Can you unscramble any of them? *AIMM* you know is Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, the mission board which asked us to come to Botswana in *SA*, Southern Africa to accept the challenge of being "Coordinator of Religious Broadcasting" for *RB*, Radio Botswana, doing this as a representative of *BCC*, the Botswana Christian Council. And one of the reasons for this task was to allow the *IC*, Independent Churches, where *AIMM* is providing missionary leaders, to get their share of time on religious broadcasts.

Although these key names have now been unscrambled — believe me, my task did not get unscrambled that quickly! Far from it. The BCC and RB relationship which was to be clarified before we came was still unclear. The Executive Secretary of BCC was on an extended administrative visit to other countries and the Director of RB was out of his office for a number of months on another government assignment. This is the climate that we found when we arrived.

We found a picture of a flowing stream with huge rocks and boulders arising out of the water with TTT spelled out for us — THINGS TAKE TIME. *TTT* almost seemed like another institution that we had to deal with. It pervaded the whole society social, political, economic and religious life. But once the two executive officers got together to work out the arrangement for my work, it still had to be approved by the Minister of Information. TTT came into play again. There are still some details to be worked out but I have had the challenge of preparing some special programs for all the Christian celebrations Good Friday, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost. Much radio time was available on these holidays.

ON EASTER MONDAY, I had a special program prepared for broadcast on the life of Thomas. The next time I got to the radio station one of the employees said, "I'm not a Christian but I enjoyed your program." This task provides unique opportunities for this is the only radio station in the country. Most people in the country listen to this station. TV has not been introduced yet and it will be at least five years until it is an option. Many of the people cannot read and rely solely on this station for their information. Five percent of their broadcast time is for religious purposes and this is the task that is my challenge. While some churches are participating now and using most of the five percent, the question is, "How can this previous time be used most effectively to convey the message of Jesus Christ?" And how can the churches, including the independent churches where AIMM is working, get a voice on the air and share in this unique opportunity? Another part of my task yet to be realized is to help train a national Batswanan to assume this role.

Radio broadcasting on the African continent is a precarious thing! In 1963 a 200,-000 watt station was built in Ethiopia by the Lutheran World Federation called "Radio Voice of the Gospel" (RVOG). Several months ago it went off the air for nine hours. That afternoon listeners in Asia and Africa heard from the "Radio Voice of Revolution in Ethiopia," not RVOG! This powerful Christian voice was silenced. Among its many programs, it was beaming a specially prepared program produced by the black community of South Africa in cooperation with the South Africa Council of Churches. This opportunity was lost when RVOG was taken over by the government.

We are grateful that RB permits a fair amount of their time for religious broadcasts. We need to use this time effectively and with discretion so that this door will remain open for the Christians of this country to share their faith, challenging others to walk in the footsteps of the Master. We want to use His airways to tell His message of redeeming love!

There are three countries in Southern Africa that appear in the news almost daily. Botswana is a next-door neighbour to all three Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). Southwest Africa (Namibia) and South Africa. Botswana being encircled by these three nations has been a haven for refugees from all these countries. MCC and AIMM have been discussing how we might be more helpful to this continual stream of humanity. Truly, they are "people without a country". Steps are being taken to recruit a couple under MCC to give special attention to this new opportunity and challenge.

THE PRIMARY FOCUS of AIMM's ministry has been to establish contact with Independent/Spiritual churches. helping them in their leadership training and Bible teaching ministries. It is hard to comprehend the vastness and the uniqueness of this task. There ten are major denominations (sometimes called "old line mission churches") in this country. And in addition or in contrast to these, there are over 150 other denominations. some very, very small and some quite large, referred to as Independent/Spiritual or Indigenous Churches.

AIMM missionaries obviously cannot minister to all these groups. However, leadership training and Bible classes are offered in Francistown, Palapye, Serowe and Gaborone where some come together from some of these 150-plus

denominations to study the Bible. So some barriers that exist between them and other groups are being broken down as the Word of God is taught and people learn to fellowship together in Christ.

Botswana Christian Council is the organization that brings together many of the larger denominations in a service and development ministry. It is concerned about the fragmentation of these various independent church groups. The government is concerned too and at times makes certain demands of them. Many of these 150 churches have names that are similar or identical and this creates a problem when they want to register with the government.

Some of these small independent churches are seeking affiliation with the BCC. Can there be agreement on the basics of the Christian faith? Can this council of about 10 major denominations incorporate these small groups as individual churches? Or must the council receive their affiliation through an association of Independent/Spiritual churches? These questions are being looked As at now. AIMM representative working with these kinds of churches. BCC has asked me to sit with them as these things are discussed. Another question is emerging: Should AIMM recruit someone to give full time to working under BCC and set up a department specifically for working with these churches on these and other matters? Could a bi-monthly paper be started which would help to inform, teach and coordinate matters of interest to these groups?

Many of the Independent/ Spiritual Churches that we have come to serve are like "sheep without a shepherd". They have special needs, problems and concerns.

AIMM has come to the country of Botswana for such a time as this! We need your understanding in a different kind of ministry and your wholehearted support.

T.T.T. almost seemed like another institution that we had to deal with!

Called and Sent



BETTY QUIRING left her home community in Dallas, Oregon, on August 1 to return to the Republic of Zaire for another term of service at

the invitation of the Mennonite church of that country. A career missionary teacher, Betty has already served four terms under the sponsorship of the AIMM. Much of this time has been devoted to the classrooms of the Nyanga Secondary School where her ministry has been effective with students not only in the classroom but outside as well.

In inviting her back for another term, the Zaire Church administration has asked her to locate in Tshikapa to give leadership to the commission of Christian Education recently established by the church. With the recent government decision to return primary and secondary education to the churches for administration and supervision, the production of Christian Education materials becomes a priority concern. Betty will bring wide experience to this new assignment.



FRANCISTOWN, BOTSWANA, was the destination for Ron Sawatzky as he left his

home in Billings, Montana in late July. Having previously served a three-year term in the same location as a teacher in a government teacher training school under MCC sponsorship, he is now returning to this same school for a two-year term under AIMM appointment. During his first term of service in that urban center, he became acquainted with one of the Independent Churches of the town and gradually developed a relationship of trust with them.

In going to Francistown, Ron will be joining Harry and Lois Dyck, AIMM personnel already there in a Bible teaching ministry among Independent Churches of that center. Together they will continue to develop this teaching ministry in that area.

AMM UPDATE

DON AND NAOMI UNRUH with daughters Lysianne and Janinne left central Kansas in late August with Kikwit, Zaire, as their goal. Having served two previous terms, they are again returning



at the invitation of the Zaire Mennonite Church. This term they have been assigned to give leadership to a new effort in theological education by extension (TEE) for the Mennonite Church in a large area in Bandundu Province.

For the first year of their term they will be locating in Kikwit for the purpose of studying Kituba, the trade language of the province, and to lay the groundwork for the new TEE program in that province. It is anticipated that they will later take up residence on one of the church posts in the interior. They are serving under the appointment of the General Conference Commission on Overseas Missions and the sponsorship of the AIMM.

With The Lord

ABBIE ANN HARDER, a former missionary of the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, passed to her reward on August 4, 1977, at her home at Newton, Kansas. A lifelong member of the First Mennonite Church at Newton, she early manifested deep commitment to Christ and to christian mission.

Upon entering marriage, she and her husband, Dr. Waldo Harder, began a series of assignments in christian ministry and mission which were to take them progressively to Oraibi, Arizona; to Elbing, Kansas, where they gave leadership to the Berean Academy; to Zaire on three different occasions where they were deeply involved in church leadership training and to Omaha, Nebraska, where her husband gave a decade of able leadership as the president of Grace College of the Bible.

Wherever they served, Abbie's gracious manner and warm spirit were constantly felt by all. A close acquaintance of hers puts it well when she says, "Abbie was a woman of the Word. She seemed to always have an ap-



propriate verse of Scripture ready for everyone and for every occasion." Although she suffered greatly from arthritis in later years, her quick smile and readiness to help others made lasting impressions on all who knew her. Of her it may truly be said that her's was a life devoted unreservedly to her family and to her Lord.

A.I.M.M. Directory

ON THE FIELD

B.P. 1 Tshikapa via Kinshasa Republic of Zaire

Gordon Claassen
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Derksen
Rev. and Mrs. Elmer Dick
Rev. and Mrs. Ben Eidse
Elda Hiebert
Jean Krehbiel
Anna V. Liechty
Rev. and Mrs. Rudolph Martens
Betty Quiring
Dr. and Mrs. Dennis Ries
Mr. and Mrs. David Rocke
Rev. and Mrs. Glenn Rocke
Lodema Short
Rev. and Mrs. Donovan Unruh

B.P. 4081 Kinshasa II Republic of Zaire

Mr. and Mrs. Herman Buller Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Lehman

B.P. 205 IMCK Tshikaji Kananga via Kinshasa Republic of Zaire

Anita Janzen

B.P. 700 Kananga via Kinshasa Republic of Zaire

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Rev. and Mrs. B. Harry Dyck

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WHAT IS IT, EXACTLY, that the missionary does? In spite of the ease of satellite communication and the swift travel afforded by jet planes, many areas of mission service are still far removed from the life and experience of an overwhelming majority of our constituent groups that have supported our work through the years. "Missionary work" is still surrounded by a certain aura of mystery; it is still believed to be for a very few and very special people who have many extraordinary gifts and abilities. "Missionary work", according to the popular conception, is of necessity done in far away corners of the globe in very exotic circumstances. As to what a missionary actually does, there is even less real understanding. For the traditional understanding of things, missionary work is a very saintly occupation in which one must daily engage in spiritual battle and wield long since perfected spiritual armor with flawless efficiency. A missionary, it is thought, is a person who has direct and immediate access to resources of spiritual grace and power unavailable to lesser mortals. Spiritual victories, therefore, are inevitable; a foregone conclusion.

But what, really, does a missionary do? What sort of events go into making up a missionary day?

WHILE IT IS IMPOSSIBLE to depict in detail the day to day activity of your missionary overseas, a helpful corrective to at least some of the popular misconceptions might be to remember:

- that the missionary is a flesh and blood, very human person subject to all of the weaknesses, quirks, and peculiarities of human beings everywhere;
- that the missionary is a person who needs to experience the corrective ministry of God's Word in his life as much as anyone else;
- that the missionary's work of any particular day will more often than not have to do with routine, ordinary tasks very much devoid of excitement or glamor;
- that the missionary is a missionary only to the extent that he or she is useable in God's hands;
- that the most successful missionary work often has to do with small actions of compassion and love taken in response to human needs, whether material or spiritual.

True, your missionaries are called upon to express themselves in foreign tongues and to find their way amidst cultures strange to them. But their work and responsibilities do not differ all that much from those of true disciples of Christ anywhere. The missionaries task, just like that of any committed follower of Christ, is to permit the indwelling Spirit of God to reach out through them and to relate and minister to those who know Him not.

WITH THESE SUGGESTIONS in mind, turn to ponder the missionary articles of this issue which describe some of your missionaries at work.

James Bertsche

ISSIONARY WORK: